

VOICES OF THE NORTH
AND
ECHOES OF HELLAS

GEORGE HANDLEY KNIBBS



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BOOK I
VOICES OF THE NORTH
AND
BOOK II
ECHOES OF HELLAS

Book I
Voices of the North
and
Book II
Echoes of Hellas

By
George Handley Knibbs



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FOREWORD

THIS Volume consists of two Books, each of three parts, Book I having the general title *Voices of the North*, and Book II that of *Echoes of Hellas*.

The parts of each book have subtitles as follow :—

BOOK I. VOICES OF THE NORTH

Part I, "King Fjalar"; Part II, "Paraphrases of Finnish Poems"; Part III, "Echoes of Finland."

BOOK II. ECHOES OF HELLAS

Part I, "Eros and Psyche"; Part II, "Songs of Nature"; Part III, "Songs of Death."

Part III of Book I and Parts II and III of Book II are original poems. Parts I and II of Book I are paraphrases, rather than strict translations, of poems by Finnish authors; and Part I of Book II is a translation of a rendering into German by Linke of the story we owe to Apuleius.

Each Book has its own dedication, preface, and list of contents, to which reference may be made as to its general character.

GEORGE HANDLEY KNIBBS

Australia, January 1913.

BOOK I

DEDICATION

O SPIRIT of the wondrous Arctic skies,
Where Day in Night mysterious fades and dies !
Thou hast revealed thy Music sad and sweet,
Through singers of the North. And now arise,
Responsive to their lays, souls here who greet
The chaste expression of that nobler gain,
A deeper knowledge of Earth's Joy and Pain.

Accept this little tribute of my song,
Faint echo of that sweet-impassioned throng
Of Voices, in a land whose long Night drear
Is graced by subtle lights o'er fields of snow,
Drawing our inmost selves to Heaven near,
That we may feel its sacred touch and glow,
The beauty of the Voice celestial know.

BOOK I

PREFACE

Voices of the North is divided into three parts, viz. :— I. “ King Fjalar,” a poem of five cantos ; II. “ Paraphrases of Finnish Poems ” ; and III. “ Echoes of Finland.” The first two parts cannot be regarded as strict translations of the originals ; they are rather attempts to render quite freely into English the thoughts of the poets (see Note 1). Since the genius of poetry demands it, care has ordinarily been taken to reproduce their tropes ; nevertheless, wherever the genius of the English language placed difficulties in the way of doing this, there has been no hesitation in re-expressing the thought under other figures ; nor have the measures of the originals been adhered to ; and in the poem “ King Fjalar ” no attempt has been made to render the story stanza for stanza. It is nevertheless believed that the spirit of the original has been retained.

As the poets of Finland are not very widely known to English readers, some brief remarks may appropriately be appended concerning them.

The *Rev. Johan Ludvig Runeberg*, Ph.D., D.D., is regarded as perhaps the greatest of Finland’s poets, and perhaps no man has done more than he to intensify Finnish patriotism. He was born on February 5, 1804, and died on May 6, 1877. Originally a schoolmaster in a provincial town, and afterwards Lector Eloquentiæ et Poeseos at Borgå, he was able to give the Finnish people the reflection in poetical form of their own life, with its manly courage, its struggle and self-denial, and its sorrows. His greater efforts were—*Grafven i Perrho* (*The Grave in Perrho*) ; *Elgspyttarne* (*Elk-hunters*), published in 1832 ; *Hanna*, 1836 ; *Julqvällen* (*Christmas Eve*), 1841 ;

Fänrik Ståls Sägner (*Ensign Stål's Songs*), 1848–1860; *Nadeschda*, 1841; *Kung Fjalar* (*King Fjalar*), 1844; and *Kungarne på Salamis* (*The Kings of Salamis*), 1863. Two days after the publication of this last poem, he had a paralytic stroke, and fourteen years afterwards passed away.

In the poem *King Fjalar*, Runeberg gave expression to his own belief that the vicissitudes of life are not meaningless as they appear to be, but are a discipline to man's spirit. In 1842 he had become acquainted with a metrical translation into Swedish of Ossian's songs, and he came to understand the spirit of Erin (Ireland) and of Morven (Scotland).

In brief, the story of the poem is as follows :—Fjalar, King of Gauthiod (*i. e.* in Scottish, Lochlin), a Viking of immense renown, lives to promote only his own glory. After a stormy life of conquest he, however, decides to convert his kingdom into a peaceful and happy land. Self-reliant and boastful, he is warned by the seer, Dargar, that man is ever in the hands of the gods, and that, humbled by his only son clasping in bridal embrace his own sister, his race shall die out. Insanely intending to challenge the power of the gods, he then decides to sacrifice his daughter Gerda, later known as Oihonna; his old warrior-friend, Sjolf, throwing her into a tempestuous sea beneath Vidar's cliff, on the summit of which stood Fjalar's stronghold. She, however, is saved by an outlaw, Darga, who, badly burnt on his own ship—which had been fired by lightning—plunges with Oihonna into the waves. Both are rescued by Morannal, King of Morven, Darga dying soon after on Morannal's ship. Oihonna is thus brought up with Morannal's three sons, Gall, Rurmar and Clesamor.

Hjalmar, Fjalar's son, tires of the life of peace in his father's kingdom and thirsts for Viking-fame. This angers the father, who mockingly suggests that he may take one of the abandoned ships. This he does and leaves the kingdom. Fjalar pursuing is overtaken and vanquished by an enemy, but Hjalmar rescues him. Nevertheless Fjalar tries to kill his son, but fails from weakness.

In the course of time Morannal's three sons become enamoured of Oihonna, who rejects them all, a dream-hero having entered her life. She meets her dream-ideal in actuality when Hjalmar, now famed as a sea-king, makes war upon Morannal, kills the three brothers and takes her away as his booty, he nevertheless being truly in love with her. Their nuptials are celebrated on the ocean; but Hjalmar learns later that they are brother and sister, and at her request takes her life. He then lands, reports to his father, plunges his sword into his breast and dies. Previous to this Dargar had reappeared, having mysteriously answered Fjalar's call to meet him in the hour of death. With humility the old Viking recognises at last that the gods are all-powerful; that men cannot escape these unseen powers. He then kills himself to go to the gods, for the Viking-hero must die by his own hand. The Scandinavian figures are essentially Viking personalities, but Dargar, Morannal and his sons are Keltic.

So far as I am aware the story has been translated but once into English, viz. by Anna Bohnhof, and published in Helsingfors on the centenary of Runeberg's birth, viz. in 1904. The present rendering differs considerably from that mentioned, though the story and its developments are of course identical.

As already said, the poem professes to be a paraphrase rather than a translation, and is characterised by the freedom of the former. It aims merely at repeating the story in the order of its telling by Runeberg, endeavouring throughout to present the same spirit, and to use in nearly every instance the same figures and situations. Thus, while in no way adhering word for word, or stanza for stanza, with the original, it attempts to reproduce all its essential features. Whether this be the most effective way of reproducing a poem in another language, or how far success has attended this effort to render Runeberg's story into English verse, so that it shall be instinct with the spirit of the Viking-days of Scandinavia, is for the reader familiar with the Swedish original to judge.

The "Paraphrases of Finnish Poems" are renderings

into English of the substance of some of the most beautiful Finnish poems. They have all been translated into English by Anna Krook and published in Helsingfors with many others. As submitted here, however, they resemble those referred to not at all in metre, and are identical only in regard to the thought expressed, being quite dissimilar in form, and in some instances may perhaps be regarded rather as imitations than translations.

The following remarks regarding the other authors whose poems are paraphrased may be of interest :—

The *Rev. Lars Stenbäck* was born in 1811 and died in 1870. He wrote a number of lyrical poems and hymns. In 1846 he became Director of a College in Vasa, and later Professor of Pædagogics and Didactics in the University of Helsingfors.

Zakris Topelius was born January 14, 1818, at Ruddnas, near Nykarleby, and died March 12, 1898. From 1841 to 1860 he edited a newspaper, and in addition acted as a librarian from 1846 to 1851. In 1854 he was appointed Professor of History in the University of Helsingfors. Next to J. L. Runeberg, Topelius is regarded as the greatest literary genius of Finland, and his productions from 1842 to his death cover a wide field. Between 1845 and 1850 he published a collection of lyrical poems. After this he wrote a number of fairy-tales for children (*Läsning för Barn*), several dramas, and a series of historical novels, viz., the *Fältskärns Berättelser* (Field-Surgeon's Narratives). These treat of Sweden's and Finland's history in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Jakob Tegengren was born in Vasa August 28, 1875, and is the Principal of the National High School of Närpes (1902).

Hjalmar Johannes (Nino) Runeberg was born in Rome May 27, 1874, and is a son of Walter Runeberg, sculptor, and grandson of L. J. Runeberg. His pen-name is "Alceste."

Mikael Lybeck was born March 18, 1864.

The *Rev. Karl Robert Malmström* was born March 16, 1830, and died May 21, 1900.

Josef Julius Wecksell was born March 19, 1838, and lost his

reason in 1862, having to be placed in the hospital for the insane in Helsingfors. He was the author of a number of lyrical poems and dramas, the best known of the latter being "Daniel Hjortin."

Emil von Quanten was born at Bjorneborg in Finland on August 22, 1827, and died December 5, 1903. He was first a journalist, but in 1853 he went to Stockholm, and from 1864 to 1872 was Librarian to Karl XV, after which he visited Italy. His literary productions are chiefly lyrical poems, and he is perhaps best known as the author of Finland's national hymn "Suomi's Song."

The *Echoes of Finland* are a series of original poems based upon a number of the most beautiful of the folk-songs of that country, the Finnish songs suggesting, as it were, the dominating ideas of the poems. Although these are neither translations nor paraphrases, in several instances the first stanza is a free translation of the folk-song. In every instance the originals of the songs are given both in Swedish and Finnish, and translations or paraphrases are also given of the songs themselves.

It is intended that they shall express something of the spirit of the North, and constitute an echo of the music of a country, the institutions, literature, scenery, and people of which one has learned to appreciate during a visit now a decade ago.

GEORGE HANDLEY KNIBBS.

Australia, November 1912.

BOOK I

CONTENTS

PART I

KING FJALAR

(Paraphrase of a poem in five cantos by Johan Ludvig Runeberg)

	PAGE
CANTO I	I
CANTO II	9
CANTO III	19
CANTO IV	30
CANTO V	43

PART II

PARAPHRASES OF FINNISH POEMS

1	THE DREAM (Johan Ludvig Runeberg) . . .	56
2.	TO FREYA (Johan Ludvig Runeberg) . . .	56
3.	THE FIRST KISS (Johan Ludvig Runeberg) . .	57
4	LOVE'S ENSNARING (Johan Ludvig Runeberg) .	58
5.	THE STAR (Lars Stenbäck)	59
6.	THE GOLDEN LEAVES ARE FALLING (Zakris Topelius)	59
7.	THE MIGHT OF PAIN (Jakob Tegengren) . .	60
8.	THE WHITE-WINGED BIRD (Jakob Tegengren) .	61

	PAGE
9. THE DREAMER'S THRENODY (Jakob Tegengren)	62
10. TWILIGHT (Hjalmar Johannes Runeberg) . .	62
11. A SAGA (Mikael Lybeck)	63
12. AUTUMN (Karl Robert Malmström) . .	64
13. WAS IT BUT DREAM? (Josef Julius Wecksell).	64
14. THE POLE-STAR (Emil von Qvanten) . .	65

PART III ECHOES OF FINLAND

1. LULLABY	67
2. TÚONI'S LAND	68
3. ON ELFLAND'S STRAND	70
4. TÚONI'S GIFT	72
5. GRIEVE NOT	74
6. MIDST THE SHADOWS	75
7. ROSE OF THE VALLEY	77
8. BIRD OF THE FOREST	78
9. THE RETURN	80
10. HER BEAUTY	81
11. THE KISS	82
12. PRETTY MAIDEN MINE	84
13. LOVE'S WANDERER	85
14. THE WAIF	86
15. ABSENCE	87
16. THE SAILOR'S FAREWELL	87

CONTENTS

XV

	PAGE
17. SONG OF NIGHT	88
18. PAIN'S BITTER FLOOD	90
19. SUMMER EVE	91
20. FROM EARTH TO SKY	93
21. LITTLE GUEST FROM HEAVEN	95
22. THE PAIN OF ABSENCE	96
23. THE FOREST HOME	97
24. SUMMER NIGHT IN THE FOREST	98
25. PSYCHE'S POWER	100
26. THE DIRGE OF THE WAVE	101
27. MY ABSENT DARLING	103
28. THE LAPLANDER'S SONG	104
29. CHILDHOOD'S FRIENDSHIP	105
30. REMINISCENCE	106
31. THE CHILD OF THE BILLOWS	108
32. ON DVINA'S SHORES	109
33. UNREQUITED LOVE	110
34. MISERERE	112
35. THE LITTLE WANDERER	113
36. WHERE THE HEDGE AND RIVER MEET	114
37. THE ROSE	116
NOTES	118

BOOK I
VOICES OF THE NORTH

KING FJALAR

CANTO I

Fjalar, boastful maker he of bliss
And law, shall end his race in dust and shame;
See son to sister give the marriage kiss,
And seal his doom, and end his glorious fame.¹

HIGH-THRONED now sits in noble royal hall
Stern Gauthiod's King, Fjalar, hero great :
His eyes gleam joyous at the fond recall
Of victories won by him, heart-bold, elate.

'Tis Yule-tide ; warriors jovial, bold and brave,
Drink Winter's richer mead from frothing horns ;
And torches flame. He, hoary, strong and grave,
Beholds the gladdening scene his hall adorns.

And Karé, Olaf,² Veseté ; Rafn, proved
In summer's wars ; and Ingul bold and strong ;
Agnar and Hadding, berserk-slayer, moved,
Although but beardless youths, the bards to song.

And they with scarrèd Styr, and he whose shield
Two quiversfull of arrows swift had stayed,
Brave Soté, warriors all who never yield,
Drink with their Chief, in warrior-garb arrayed.

¹ See note 1, p. 118.

² See note 2.

And agèd Sjolff, too, destroyer bold
Of mighty hosts ; thy name the bard recalls ;
For thou alone, among the great, that hold
Allegiance to Fjalar, knew these halls

When he, our king, was young. 'Twas thou who stood'st
Beside him when the crimson tide, like flood,
Flowed strong in face of danger, and withstood'st
The foe ; and thou with him did'st shed thy blood.

Behold ! The king will now in strength arise ;
His hand clasps tight the ample frothing horn ;
And eager are the royal lips : his eyes
Tell well the hour of vows. He will be sworn.

" Arise, ye warrior youths " ; thus spake the king,
" And hearken. As the agèd oak sends forth
From knotted roots exposed, bright leaves in Spring,
So are ye all, ye sons of our great North.

Among you, too, are those who know in sooth
The verdant meads, where echoed battle-cry
On Morven's shore ; where with his bloody tooth,
Dunkomar bold did bite my glaive and die.

With me nine ships, and in them lieges brave,
Who followed me, their king, to that far shore,
Where Morven's eighteen ships, upon the wave,
In glittering splendour down upon us bore.

'Twas daybreak : and before the evening light
There were but two, Sjolff the fierce and I ;
And on the sword's rich harvest, fell the bright
And silvery moonbeams, where in peace all lie.

Thus were our deeds, when we were young. And then
On chin and cheek grew beard. When we had grown

We harassed land and folk ; and went, as men,
To frigid realms where summers are unknown.

A wife I took, and though my locks were grey
Yet could I give her then a royal name.
To us were born a son and daughter ; they
Are playing on her grave their flower-game.

Now I have tired of mighty deeds and strife,
And, though their tribute far-famed rulers pay,
The bard, aweary of my quiet life,
In recent peaceful years finds nought to say.

And now my rest, also, I fain would take ;
For Life's long day and turmoil ends in ease ;
And softer winds are whispering, and they wake
No thoughts of conquest over lands and seas."

Thus spake Fjalar, while before him stood
The agèd Sjolf fierce ; though hoary now,
Untamed in rage was he ; of hotter blood ;
His eye flashed keen beneath his furrowed brow.

" Is this Fjalar's voice that pleads for ease ?
Or do mine ears play false ? Hear I aright ?
Doth then a palsy, curst, the eagle seize ;
And love of honour fade from his clear sight ?

For list ! bold Erin, vanquished twice, doth still
Defy thee, and condemn thy keen-edged sword ;
And stealthy Bjarms¹ bolder grown, their will
May wreak ; the seas make blood ; and swell their hoard.

Within the rocky fastness all is calm ;
Above it none may rest ; the weak shall quail ;
For life is stern and full of wild alarm ;
And woe, oh king, whene'er thy strength shall fail ! "

¹ See note 3.

VOICES OF THE NORTH

At Sjolff's words, about Fjalar's lips
There plays a lofty smile. His drinking horn
Is set aside. His mighty bow he grips
With brow unruffled, though his eyes flash scorn.

Now whirrs the string: an arrow like a flash
Speeds swift across the hall. And list, there rings
The sound of piercèd shield! They know how rash
Are Sjolff's words. The quivering arrow sings

Its song in pine transfixed! Not one has seen
Such perfect aim, or arrow swifter speed
In Northern realms. The king all calm in mien
His mighty voice now lifts. "Take heed!

Take heed! Ye sons of Gauthiod; list and fear:
In peace it is, not war, that I delight.
And now I vow, your king, that corn in ear
Shall ripen well, and homesteads shall be bright.

My victories now shall be fair fields and groves;
The gentle seed, asleep in every plant,
Shall blossom forth; and he who wildly roves
Shall spare the sword, and play the softer part.

In years now past strong faith and great had I
In mine own will; that faith unchanged remains;
In days when strife and danger e'er were nigh,
It ruled o'er Death; but now in peace it gains.

If outrage e'er in these my realms be rife,
And evil safe, or custom good defied;
If laws be broken; peace replaced by strife;
Then let Fjalar's vow be set aside,

His name forgot." His mighty voice resounds
Throughout the hall, and pierces, as to haft

Of spear, the warrior-breasts. No longer sounds
The voice : his horn he drains e'en at a draught.

The hall is calm ; the king has ceased, and now
He sits at peace beside the festal board ;
But from the entrance comes a guest whose brow
Is sombre ; bent at first his form ; and toward

The agèd Fjalar he strides ; and seems
With every step, a figure nobler ; grand
In his imperial height. His keen eye gleams
With light mysterious, subtle. Now his hand

He lifts majestic to the King, and throws
Aside his ample mantle. See, revealed,
There stands the great seer, Dargar ; he who knows
What all the Fates for ever have concealed

With wondrous care from man. His searching mind
Can pierce the veils that hide the shadowy forms
Of what is yet to be. For few can find
His shape among the northland fells and storms.

For long years past had he been seen by those
To whom the Fates in thunder-tones would speak,
With threatening clouds. His voice but seldom rose
To happy souls. 'Twas his the doomed to seek.

His voice impending evil meant. He spake :—
“ O King ! Thy vow is great, but yet there greater
rule

And mightier far than thou, the Gods, who make
The poor and humble great, the wise a fool.

For Dargar, high on rocky height, with awe
Has heard the thunder-cloud the future tell ;
And knows Fjalar ever makes as law
His will, and vainly thinks that all is well.

For he, with strength of dust, would Fates command.
The heavenly powers but mock, and he shall learn,
Though scornful, that the earth-born, in their hand,
Are like to bubble-pledges, things to spurn.

Fjalar, boastful maker he of bliss
And law, shall end his race in dust and shame ;
See son to sister give the marriage kiss,
And seal his doom and end his glorious fame."

A hush comes to the hall, as when the hail
Its noisy falling ends, and leaves the land
In quiet garments white. The king sits pale,
With lips as bloodless as his face and hands.

A moment raged, in frightful storm, his will.
" Go bring Hjalmar and my Gerda, aye
My son and daughter, for I shall fulfil
My purpose. Choose, for one of them must die.

I would behold them both, ere one depart ;
And know, O Seer ! that King Fjalar's will
Is strong and stubborn ; e'en thy Gods will thwart
Him not. Take greeting to them. And for good or ill,

Go ask thy Gods :—" Have they found ample power
For ever to forego, and that before
They, like Fjalar, learn when comes the hour
For action, fixing all for evermore ? '

Go now thy gloomy way. At that last call,
When King Fjalar dies upon his sword
Then come ; and ere the sinewy hand shall fall
Unnerved in death, shalt thou meet thy reward

For lie as black as hell." " O King ! " replied
The great Seer then. " 'Tis well ; for thy command

Is not in vain. The Norn is not defied
Who severs life; and thou and I must stand

Together in that strangest presence dread,
Or soon or late. Farewell, O king ! farewell.”
He vanished. And the royal children, led
By waiting maid, approached. On all there fell

A strange foreboding of some doom to come.
She placed the children on their father's knee,
In silence sad; and all around were dumb,
For now Fjalar, king, his weird shall dree.

All joy hath fled. Around the royal hall
The frothing beaker passeth not. Their gaze
Is fixed upon the King; their glances fall
Upon the children too, with dread amaze.

Alas, and one must die ! His glances keen
Fjalar turns at first upon his son,
Hjalmar, whom with sombre brow and mien
He scorns; and yet decision is not won.

See, now he looks on Gerda, with a gaze
Serene and clear, which she doth meet with smile;
And, nestling on her father's heart her face,
Secure and happy feels. Thus, free from guile,

She meets his eye. Fjalar trembling feels
Her power, and he, who mighty Gods had spurned,
Is fearful for his strong resolve; he reels;
And by weak pity for his child is turned.

Thus restless sweeps his gaze, with air perplexed,
From Hjalmar, then to Gerda fair; and back
Again to son; the while, with spirit vexed,
An inward tempest all his soul doth rack.

And while the King, with upward fixèd stare,
Long pondered o'er the grave decision dread,
Sjolf arose with wan and trembling air;
His voice was broken, and his eyes tear-fed.

“ O King ! Thy son it is must wield the sword,
When thou with weak and nerveless arm shalt rest ;
Whose prowess we can ne'er afford
To lose, when mighty foes our strength shall test.

Fjalar, then, no longer stay thy choice ;
The rocks are steep and rugged is the shore ;
The waves but wait to still the gentle voice ;
And let the little life-spark quickly soar,

In body quenched, but free from earthly care.”
His words were ended and the little maid
He bore away all happy, smiling, fair ;
An unsuspecting victim, unafraid.

Stern sat the king and mute. No limb he moved.
The arm that round his child had fondly clung
Was empty now, and palsied. He had proved
His stubborn will, e'en though his heart was wrung.

And when his eyes their hard, stern, searching look
Cast round the warriors in his royal hall,
Though used to death and danger, and to brook
No menace, nor to shrink whate'er appal,

They quailed beneath the lightning of his eye,
That flash born in his fearful night of pain ;
And when he broke the silence with a sigh,
His voice seemed strange, and awful with disdain.

Like roll of distant thunder came the words :—
“ O ye, who see my sorrow, know that strife

Has now begun between me and the Gods,
The strife that shall continue through my life.

Woe be to him who fails to ever hide
What here he saw on this my day of pain;
For he who fails in this shall ill betide,
And vengeance find him, e'en across the main.

No tongue shall e'er my daughter's name pronounce,
For it shall live, deep in my heart alone;
Her record, ah, 'tis there, and I renounce
All other." And the words seemed like a groan.

" Till I have reached my end, and till the grave
Has ta'en my body in its endless keep,
Let no one e'er betray that I did lave,
For victory, in an anguish dread and deep."

Thus spake Fjalar, rising from his throne,
And with Hjalmar left the royal hall;
And as he passed, the wind swept with a moan,
And stillness like to death reigned over all.

The years came swift, and swiftly fled away;
Fjalar's fame was borne from land to land;
But no one heard of Gerda from that day;
Her name was lost in deep Oblivion's strand.

CANTO II

O maid of Shelma, who shall win thee? Say
For whom wilt thou be rose and lily fair?
On whom wilt thou bestow the scent of May
And zephyr-fragrance, with thy beauty rare? ¹

THOU home of heroes, stately Shelma bright,
Whose towers are mirrored clear in Crona's waves;
O'er Morven from the East comes flood of light,
That now the Sun with golden glory laves!

¹ See note 1.

Where Fingal¹ ruled, the hall is light ; and yet
Three men there are in whom all dark thoughts throng ;
The sons of aged Morannal. Fame hath set
His name as Monarch, in this land of Song.

Though brothers, they are silent, sad, depressed.
The archer skilled, but sullen now, is Gall ;
And Rurmar, minstrel, is by gloom possessed,
E'en late from wars. And though none may appal

Clesamor, he doth seem in silent mood.
Each scans his brothers with a threatening gleam,
And in their blood there lurks that poison-food,
Which enmity creates. And all things seem

Embittered. Thus like storm incipient, doom
Foreboding, were their thoughts and words.
But wherefore, in the radiant morn, such gloom,
As full of menace as ill-omened birds ?

In Ossian's days, in Fingal's too, no strange
Sad stormy spirit reigned like this o'er all ;
For bards with skilful fingers swept the range
Of notes on harp ; and in this royal hall,

Extolling hero-deeds, sang minstrel-songs.
The men of old were giant men of heft,
And when their foes attacked in savage throngs,
Like leaping flames, they from their forests swept

Upon their foes. They little recked, or cared
For danger then. At other times as mild
As summer's day, they wandered and they shared
All Shelma's beauty, gentle as a child.

Aye, sons of Kings, this internecine strife,
And nourishing of wrath and hate and feud,

¹ See note 4.

Is menace to fair Morven's peace and life ;
Solicits all the evil powers, not good.

O maiden fair, the flower of Shelma, thou !
It is through thee that Gall forgets his bow ;
For thee it is that Rurmar sings his vow ;
And Clesamor in battle-strife would glow.

O maid of Shelma ! Who shall win thee ? Say
For whom wilt thou be rose and lily fair ?
On whom wilt thou bestow the scent of May
And zephyr-fragrance, with thy beauty rare ?

The chieftain Gall no longer hides his pain ;
He, eldest, thus the gloomy silence breaks ;
His strongest self-control is all but vain,
As he in urgent speech proposal makes.

“ Morannal is our sire and king ; we three
Were born to him, our mother being one ;
From heaven above, whose cloudland realms we see,
Ancestors watch us, far beyond the sun.

Great Fingal, stern of aspect, ever views
The stealthy foe. Who dared approach these hills,
While he was ardent youth, with iron thews,
He fiercely fought, and with a joy that thrills.

But what shall come to Morven's memory fair—
Our land—whose harps in magic tones are heard,
While bards, in wondrous minstrelsy, declare
The glories of its heroes, in each word ?

Alas, should feud arise, through poison-hate,
And chieftain 'gainst his brother chieftain turn
And strike the death-blow in an armed debate,
Impelled by wrath, that ne'er should fiercely burn !

But one alone can win the morning cloud,
The fair Oihonna. Other maids to wed
Throughout the world there are ; and haughty, proud
Who fails to win, must by his Fate be led.

Then let us now our agèd father seek
In friendly concord : let him all decide
Between us. In his stronghold, blind and weak,
He stays ; yet let his judgment be our guide.

O King, in brothers' hearts is bitter hate ;
And anger grows apace in this thy hall ;
We pray thee all for pardon, lest too late
Through us a danger on thy kingdom fall.

In secret we Oihonna truly love ;
Like mighty torrent swells the danger dread ;
But it can live alone while hope shall move ;
When she is bride of one, will feud be dead.

Thy love for us hath ever been the same ;
In equal love we all have been thy care ;
For us decide, and he whom thou shalt name,
Shall wed Oihonna, our sea-jewel fair."

In silence long the agèd King did weigh
The saddened words ; and then his answer gave.
" To me Oihonna, free, was given one day ;
She freedom learned in far-off sea and wave.

Her childhood, unrestrained, in quiet streams
Was mirrored oft. Like gentle zephyr then
She seemed ; like sunbeams on a wave that gleams
On smiling shores ; and thus she once again

Brought light into my darkened, waning life.
Then must the zephyr therefore freely float,

Its fragrance wafting as it will ; and strife
It shall not know, nor feel. And as the mote

In sunbeam freely moves, and hinder it may none.
So free shall be Oihonna ; none shall bar
Her way. And doth she love thee, Gall my son,
My archer ? Ah, perchance, 'tis thee, Rurmar ?

Or would she follow thee to battle wild
Clesamor bold ? Inquire of her what choice
Is hers, in order of thine age. No child
Is she. Obey, when thou hast heard her voice

That thou rejected art. She shall decide.”
With clustering tresses round her shapely head,
She sits by Crona, in her maiden pride,
When Gall approaches, asking her to wed.

He nears the cave ; she, startled, hears him plead :
“ Oh, come, Oihonna, mine for ever be ;
I, lord of moorlands, of thy love have need,
And bid thee come, where thou shalt daily see

The huntsman's bliss. I love thee, roseate cloud.¹
Hast thou e'er seen from highest peak the glow
Of morning light ; the sunbeams lift the shroud
Of quivering haze ; of silvery stream the flow

And glitter in the morning air ; the stir
Of woodland breezes 'mongst the flickering leaves ;
The brooklet's foam and rush in glens ; the whirr
Of wings of birds exultant, as each cleaves

The air with happy song ? And hast thou felt
Thy heart-pulse, when the stag, his wildest flight
Finds checked in rustling copse, as horn-blasts melt
Away o'er hill and dale, in changing light ;

¹ Original, *rosiga sky*.

And when the leaping hound brings him to bay?
Oihonna, dost thou love the glittering stars
In evening light? Then come with me where ray
Of sun illumines, and where high Mallmor bars

The glorious golden flood; and watch the red,
Resplendent, turn to grey, as Night is born;
And heavenly radiance when the Day is dead,
Pulsating strangely till the birth of Dawn.

How oft have I on yonder hill reclined
To see the glowing sun, in western sky,
The gates of heaven close; and sink behind
The purple hills, while in the clouds on high

The rose-tints like a maiden's blush would fade!
How oft have I the evening's fresher air
Drunk deep, and seen the dusky mystic shade
Steal o'er the quiet scene, so wondrous fair!

And in the calm of night let fancy free!
For fair is life on mountain high: we breathe
More deeply in sweet-scented woods. Oh, be
My bride, and bliss shall fill thy heart, and wreath

Its tendrils through thy life. Then be thou mine,
Mine own fair bride, Oihonna, for my soul
Hath need of thee, and let my life and thine
Be intertwined, in one great happy whole."

Then, deeply moved, fair Shelma's maid replied:
"O Gall! I love great space's strange allure;
And cool winds of the distant hill have vied
With charms of rest in valley depths secure.

But deeper love have I for ballads old
Which speak of heroes great of former days;

My cheeks then glow, my hair in every fold
Vibrates, when all of Ossian's deeds are told.

The mountain verdure oft hath drunk the blood
Of flying stag, by my swift arrow slain ;
And I have watched the flowing crimson flood,
And thought my bow had sound like thine. Was't vain ?

O Gall ! Then go, my steps o'er Morven's land
Are happiest when I guide myself. My bow
And arrow, and my hounds, are best in hand
While I am free ; and this I fully know."

He passed with saddened mien and clouded brow.
And Rurmar entered, king of harp and song.
He, speechless, bent upon Oihonna now,
Aglow with ardent love his gaze. And long

He looked, until the words rang out, afire
With ardency and pain. " O fairest maid !
Thy presence stirs my soul, and I aspire
To flights beyond this world, whose visions fade

As hazy mists at morn. And now a strange
And deeper thought possesses. Ne'er shall fame
My memory bear, nor I the fuller range
Of Music and of Song command. Thy name

Forever stirs my blood. I think how pain
And sorrow all my youth have held in thrall.
I homage gave to every hero's gain
Of fame for Morven, did they fighting fall,

Or win. Their mighty prowess have I sung
In royal halls, and told their deeds abroad ;
And, with impassioned feeling, have I wrung
The wild notes from my harp in true accord.

But now no more I think of valiant deeds
Whose fame and glory dazzled once mine eyes ;
The dust my harp besmirches, and it needs
Must lie, since I no longer now can prize

Its richer, wilder sounds. In lower tone
I sing my sorrow strange, and e'er avow
The turmoil of my heart ; and hear the moan
Of waves that break on Crona's shore. I bow

Myself in silence. Yet I dream of days
When joy shall wake my spirit once again,
And then shall Rurmar sing diviner lays,
And note shall follow note like summer rain.

Oihonna, thou alone hast now the power
To give to Rurmar fame in coming years ;
'Tis thy sweet beauty only can endow
My song with magic force, that can to tears

Or gladness move. Give then that subtle power,
That in the future all may proudly say ;—
' 'Twas thus he sang from that great happy hour
When from Oihonna's eyes he learned his lay.' "

The sea-born maiden answered thus his quest :
" O Rurmar ! See ! By this bright limpid stream
The flower ; how breezes bend its stem to rest
Upon the verdant sward. What doth it deem .

Of tempest winds ? Then sing thy yearning song
Till evening dewdrops glisten, like to tears
Within its perfumed cup. Thy hand doth long
For sadder things, that lend the soul its fears.

Oihonna loves alone the clamour wild
Of harp that thunders forth, like flashing glaives,

The stir of battle-song ; and is beguiled
By minstrel homage to the valiant braves

Who know no peril. Eyes of living power
Alone her heart inflame. Let her be heard.
Oihonna loveth not thy saddened hour,
And for thy pleading hath no answering word."

With anger hot then flashed the bard's deep eye
And flush spread o'er his thoughtful pallid face.
He turned and mutely passed, and no weak sigh
Escaped him ; he whose minstrelsy was grace.

Now proudly toward fair Shelma's lovely maid,
Came Clesamor the battle-lord and bold,
And said : " My brothers both have fairly made
Their pleading to Oihonna. But they hold

No promise from the maid. And I am third.
No wordy lore hath taught me war's great art ;
But on the blood-stained field I learned to gird
At mighty foes ; with glaive to play my part.

And there 'midst crimsoned bucklers did I slay.
Oihonna, dost thou glory with the strong ?
Then ere I haste again to hero-play
Let me embrace thee, as my bride life-long."

From mossy rock Oihonna sprang upright,
And warmly grasped Clesamor's hand, and gazed
Undaunted in his questioning eye ; whose light
Shone earnest with imperious will, and blazed

With passion's fiercest ardour, wildest zest.
Then spake Oihonna, answering, thus : " Mine own
And well-loved brother, O Clesamor ! best
And best-beloved in Morven ; thou alone

Dost love the kindling spark from burning brand,
And War's debate. When thou did'st wander far
And sought for fame in distant sea and land
My heart went with thee, and I knew thy star

Of destiny ascendant was. I knew
The spirits of those heroes great and strong,
Thine ancestors, were with thee, bold and true,
Then stay not here, Clesamor. Loud and long

The cry of battle calls. Bold scion thou
Of Fingal's race, lead thou in fiercest fight,
And through the ranks of foes such havoc plough
That they shall rue it all, in Death's dark night.

And when the bard shall come with harp and song,
Then shall I sit, within the shield-lung hall,
His music wild to learn, and fondly long
To hear thy name. And should a dark fate call

Thy youth and strength, Clesamor, e'en to fly
To fleecy cloud, ah, bend thy gaze down here
On Morven fair, where we have wandered nigh
Each other's hearts. Then shalt thou see the tear

That I must shed, when, wandering o'er the path,
I think of days that we together shared.
For Sorrow is Affection's aftermath.
I'll think too of thy massive brow that bared

Itself of clustering locks of raven hue.
But deep affection is not Love's great flame
That thirsts and hungers as I fain would do
As bride. The king of Shelnia gave his name

And care to each; and he, our father great,
Has reared us all in yonder castle bold.

And I with sister-love, yes, I will wait
To hear thy deeds of prowess proudly told."

She ceased, and thus the chieftain quick replied :
 “ Morannal did not give thee life, nor art
 Thou sister. Thou wert born beyond the tide
 That breaks on Morven’s shore. And know, dear heart,

No woman gave thee to Morannal, king.”
With gentle eyes of grace Oihonna then
His forehead kissed. “Oh let me bring
Thee sister’s, not a bridal love. For when

My lover comes for me, 'twill all be best.
For come he will like cloud from verge of sky,
Like gust that sweeps the moor with fiercest zest,
All unannounced. With him I'll live—or die."

CANTO III

They sing and dream of me . . . A wave whose gleam
From spring-tide sun seems warm, and thus can hide
A breast of ice. Alas! 'Tis neither wave
Nor winter's wind, nor treacherous icy tide
That tells of me; for mighty love I crave.¹

OH, list ! Who hunts the deer of Lora's vale ?
And whence the blast of horn that echoed well,
Like thousand answers, in the cool and pale
Responsive evening air, as gloaming fell

Upon the scene. There moved Oihonna, maid,
Where Crona's billows bend round headland bold
On which the splendid oak's dark clustering shade
Is found, and mossy bank and waters cold.

¹ See note 1.

And she, the maid of billows, seated there
On bed of heather, stroked her staghound lithe,
Who stood beside her in the quiet air,
Exultant in the chase, in spirit blithe.

And as the staghound watched the dark-red spot
Where arrow swift brought down the flying deer,
The crimsoned witness that Oihonna's shot
Was true, behold Gylnandyne now drew near.

For not alone was Shelma's maid in chase ;
And now, approaching her with tardy feet,
Gylnandyne came—with friendly smiling face—
Oihonna then with cordial warmth to greet.

“ Hidjallan's daughter, come, thy welcome speak ;
The eve is fair, yet now the freshening breeze
Makes fluttering tresses play upon my cheek,
And sweeps the moorland wild. Come then and seize

The moment bright, and sing for me a lay,
While in the east the moon its silvery rays
O'er heather-covered paths doth shed, and sway
Holds over all. That thou in former days

Hast sung Oihonna's coldness and her pride
Is reason now for other theme ; for pain
She loveth not, and thus through song would guide
Her thoughts in happy paths where glad things reign.”

Gylnandyne on the heather lying sang ;
With eyes that filled with tears, looked toward the sky ;
And 'neath the darkening azure-space there rang
The notes of pain, not pleasure's melody.

In dark-blue heaven appeared a lonely cloud :
With fixèd eyes she followed then its course

And sang :—" Crualin's joy, I cry aloud
Oh, where art thou, the warrior's joy and force ?

I look above and cry,—' In starry deeps
Art thou ? ' Then mount yon silver cloud and see
From thence that one is here, whose passion leaps
For thee ; thy joy, Oihonna. It is she.

In days gone by, O Le, thine eyes were bright
When in thy father's hall, Gylnandyne then
Thou sawest, and her hastening footsteps light,
To Morven's moorland, and in many a glen.

A guest thou wert in Morven, land of song
And harp's sweet tones. And in those days of bliss
These hills oft knew thy happy steps, and long
Did'st thou Gylnandyne's bugle hear, and raise

Thyself to list to its allure. 'Twas here
Thine eyes beheld Oihonna, fairest maid,
All else was then forgot. Did aught appear
Of worth to thee ? Ah no ! For all must fade

Before her. I, Gylnandyne, quickly knew
Thine eyes could see alone her fairest form,
And I must die. But what fair blossoms grew
For thee ? Thy lips were mute. As in the storm

The cloud is dark and sombre, threatening rain,
So swift departed every smile, and tears
For ever gathered on thy cheek. Ah, fain
Would'st thou have ended all thy love's sad fears

On maid of Shelma's breast. But bloodless shade
Thou wert in broadest day ; a flickering breeze
On darkening heath. One morn, a journey made
Unheeded and alone, when thou did'st seize

From maid of Shelma's glittering quiver rare,
A barbèd arrow. Thou did'st hide the shaft
Down deep in thine own breast ; and ever there
It rests. The harp of victory ne'er shall waft

For thee its glowing strains, nor soars thy fame
On memory's wings. From gallant deeds, too soon
Thine arm was called away, and softer flame
A woman lit, and o'er thy doom will croon.

Her lay is not the bard's. O shadow-cloud
That brings to thee no light ! Nor doth her grief
Seem aught to thee, as would Oihonna's, proud,
Thy loved one, she whose life to thee was chief.

Oh, wing thy flight, like moorland breeze, my song !
Unsought, unanswered. Ah ! In night's embrace
'Twere sweet to sleep and then, deep-sighing, long
For that sweet sleep that Sorrow shall efface."

The lay was ended. Back from hill and dale
Came echo, sounding now a long farewell,
And 'midst the rocks on Crona's shore, the veil
Of sombre night descended. Distant swell

They heard of wave on shore, with its sad boom.
Oihonna in the starlit night then turned
Her shining eyes on Gylnandyne, whose doom
She felt, and holding fast her hand, while burned

Her soul in sympathy, the sea-born maid
Thus spake—" Alas ! 'Tis thus they sing and dream
Of me ; a wintry mountain wind that played
With homely dale-grown flowers. A wave whose gleam

From spring-tide sun seems warm, and thus can hide
A breast of ice. Alas ! 'Tis neither wave,

Nor winter's wind, nor treacherous icy tide,
That tells of me ; for mighty love I crave.

But why no longer here on Morven's shores
Are heroes born ? No son of Fingal now
Can bear the ancient shield, and never soars
The strain of music, till some hero's vow

Commits to high exploit, through its strange force,
The bards sing doleful tones. Of sighs and tears
Enough. When wandering dreaming through the gorse
I feel no answering love for trembling fears.

No love-return for ardent swain's. They fret,
But play not Ossian's harp, and I can give
Their pleading love not passion, but regret.
They neither brave nor strong are ; do not *live*.

When will my storm-cloud, tempest-like, draw nigh ?
He of my day-dreams come, with battle roar ;
With flashes from his glittering glaive, not sigh ;
And set on fire my heart, till passion pour

In uncontrollèd flood ? Gylnandyne, hark !
The clang and clash of war is my delight ;
Not wailing tones. I revel in the dark
Storm-clouds, in bracing blasts, in lightnings bright.

There is a tale that King Fjalar reigned
In distant Lochlin ; and his rule was peace.
But stories of his earlier days remained
When he was called great Lodin's gale. Surcease

Of wild unrest, of love of fray and war,
Had not then come. But that Fjalar old
And grey is weary ; and alas no more
He fights, but drinks his mead in comfort cold.

His sword now scarce can leave its rusty sheath ;
Dismantled lie his ships upon the shore.
One morn his son approached ; and then beneath
His father's gaze, they heard him thus implore :—

‘ O father, build for me a galley strong ;
The paths that thou hast trod are my allure ;
Mine arm is stalwart, and my soul doth long
For deeds like thine, that will my fame secure.’

The king sat silent, but his son waxed bold,
And cried ‘ My father, hear ! Without renown
I cannot stay ; nor idle rest, and cold,
While bards praise none but him who wears the crown.’

Then sternly spake Fjalar :—‘ Peace I vowed
Should grace my kingdom, and should bless my land ;
My day was stormy ; now no sombre cloud
Shall cast its gloom or curse this joyous strand.

From burning homesteads and from plundered fields
Doth bloody war no longer show its face ;
The happy harvests now give richest yields
And naught is there to hinder now our race.’

The son a moment silent stood, the while
A glowing tear ran o'er his cheek ; and then
His face grew earnest, in his eyes a smile ;
While he poured forth with pain his prayer again.

‘ O king, can'st thou with justice claim the right
To send me, thus condemned, to mean career,
Inglorious peace, oblivion of the Night ?
Then take my life, thou wast its fountain here.

’Tis better thus to die, a fameless youth,
But harder far to live, in this employ ;

Why dost thou coldly frown? I speak but truth;
I cannot live, and therefore die with joy.'

The King was silent and his wrath waxed hot;
His words were calm, but keen his icy air :—
' Desirest thou a ship? Then is there not
On yonder shore my viking-vessel fair?

The ship I sailed in my exploits; with keel
All crushed, and grass amidst decaying beams,
And daylight shining through her planks! I feel
'Tis worthy of thee, and such ship beseems

Hjalmar. Take her o'er the seas, forgot
By King Fjalar, there to win a name
'Midst distant foes and folk; for I will not
Regard as filial, this wild thirst for fame.'

Hjalmar, turning, left the royal court
Where softer play gave each his highest fame.
Where men, who once grasped swords and boldly fought,
Threw balls and missiles as in childhood's game.

' Ho! Are there still of men who love to fight?
Then follow me upon the boundless sea.
Where mighty shield and flashing steel shine bright
Where life is *not* spent ever shamelessly?

The grass hath grown right well about the keel;
And daylight beams through this my viking-ship;
But 'tis not keels, but men who boldly seal
Their right to fame, with warrior's deadly grip.'

His mighty voice rang out, like thunder rolls,
From blackest cloud aloft in wild dark sky
When storm-gods on the seas exact their tolls,
And wake the slumbering to the doom that's nigh.

The billows heaved upon the quiet sea,
The gale was spent; the brave youths brake a wall;
Then bounding forth upon their quest with glee
They watched the shore receding, joyous all.

‘ To sea, to alien lands, to conquering war ! ’
Thus rang their cry. A half-sunk ship defied
With viking mettle, every wild wave’s roar.
Thus they that life began, the king denied.

They told the king :— ‘ Thy son hath fled the land,
His galley now doth float upon the wave;
He takes with him a bold and stalwart band,
Thy bravest warriors, who this land can save.’

The king was wroth, and dark his frowning brow;
His shield from echoing tower rang loud and long :—
‘ Our land is outraged, forth to sea, for now
Must death be his, for this defiant wrong.’

Then Sjolf bold, Fjalar’s fearless friend
And brother, in his warrior-days, thus spake :—
‘ O King, take pause, nor madly seek to send
Against the eagle, swallows, who shall take

‘ For guerdon certain doom. For should’st thou find
Hjalmar, what avail? Thy palsied hand
Is for his strength unmatched. Thou canst not find
Hjalmar, nor defeat his gallant band.’

No word Fjalar answered; but he bent
His tardy painèd steps then toward the shore.
Upon his face his wrath was writ, and lent
Him power. Three days o’er trackless sea he bore.

And then a ship he saw, that boldly steered
Its course directly toward him, and arrived

He heard the Bjarm's ¹ tongue, and quickly cleared
For battle then. 'Thy fierce son hath deprived

'Us of our King, and hath his ship. Prepare
For war. Thou must redeem his wild assault
And dying leave thy ship to us. Beware !'
The fight was fierce and long. No man at fault

In fence or guard, but failed to fall. And soon
Fjalar's host was sorely thinned. There stood
A phalanx strong of shields around. His noon
Had passed. No longer now a victory could

He hope to win, and sought alone to fall—
With all his warriors old but brave—with fame.
A while the battle raged ; none heard the call
Or saw the galley, with an alien name,

Come swiftly near. Her prow was richly gilt
Her sails were crimson. On her mast was flown
The Gauthiod pennon. And more strongly built
Was she than this their ancient ship. Soon shone

The flashing shields, and stalwart youths and bold—
Who loved to rouse to life 'the feast of swords'—
Came swift to rescue of Fjalar old :
They soon, for every Bjarm, cut life's cords.

The sun in western sky now sank to rest ;
The king had victory on his side, though won
By Hjalmar, yet his brow was dark ; no zest
Of pleasure showed he, thus to meet his son.

And then with unsheathed sword he spake at last
In trembling tones. 'Too soon it is to sheathe
My blood-stained sword. Its duty is not past
While foes upon my galley's deck still breathe

¹ See note 3.

Although the Bjarm was not e'er my foe,
And though I crossed no sea, and braved no tide
To meet him, yet I seek those, high and low,
Who turn my vows to sport, and me deride.

Stand forth thou, with thy visor closed; receive
A stern rebuke, with sharper edge than words,
Thy father now permits thee to retrieve
In fight thy deep offence, and thus with swords

Decide. Draw then the sword he gave his son
Against thy sire. If not, then humbly bend
Thy knees; receive thy doom. Repentance won,
Atone thy fault, for swiftest death I send

By mine own hand.' A murmur rose and fell
Among those warriors brave, like restless moan
Of stormy wave. Then silence cast its spell
O'er all, while Gauthiod's chief, erect, alone,

Stood waiting for his son. And sword and shield
Hjalmar, victor, laid upon the deck
Before his sire; and thus unarmed did yield
Him, kneeling low. The stern old king, with fleck

Of blood upon his sword, that brightly gleamed
In light of dying day, then aimed the blow
At that fair head. A sound rang out that seemed
The knell of doom. The helmet strong can show

No damage; and unhurt remained the son.
'Alas! my day is done!' Thus spake the king :—
'Remove thy helmet, for thy blood shall run;
My stroke is now too weak thy fate to bring

To thee, through steely mail.' The son then bared
His head. Hjalmar brave, defenceless now

Became. With happy quiet smile, prepared
For death, he gazed upon the deck. The vow

Of vengeance, still Fjalar madly stirred ;
He aimed the death-blow at his only son.
His palsied and uncertain arm preferred
To weakly execute his will. 'Twas done ;

But still Hjalmar lived. The sword hath found
A resting-place, not more, upon his head.
And now with boldest men his ship will bound
O'er ocean wave and stormy sea instead.

Fjalar reigns content, with softened heart ;
And when the guests assembled drink the mead,
The agèd bard is stirred to minstrel's art
And now forgets the older valiant deed,

And sings alone the stories of the brave
And mighty hero, now—Hjalmar bold.
Fjalar is forgot. And when the wave
Brings tidings fresh of feats, no longer old

Doth seem Fjalar's eye. His horn of mead
He lifts on high with newer life and fire,
And warmest thanks unto the bard will speed :
The king is proud to be Hjalmar's sire."

Her tale is ended now. The dewdrops lie
Upon the verdant sward. The moon her beams
Sends forth o'er dark-blue hill, whose colours vie
In beauty with the mystic tones, and gleams

Of iridescent light, through misty cloud
The summer night sped on, and o'er the plain
There came a messenger in haste. " I vowed
To find thee, fair Oihonna, not in vain,

For Morven's king doth ask thy presence, e'en
 Ere dawn shall come." "Reply!" then said the maid—
 "Is Death's cold hand now near? What hast thou seen?
 Doth he prepare from out this world to fade?"

"The clang of arms I heard in Morven's hall,
 And thrice the king did strike the royal shield;
 The war-cry loud has passed from each to all
 And swift the warriors come o'er moor and field."

Then rose the maid of Shelma fair, whose eyes
 Gleamed brightly as she this, her answer, gave;
 Take my reply, 'tis this:—"Ere morn arise
 I shall in Morven's hall an audience crave."

CANTO IV

Why lingereth now Fjalar's son? Hath he
 In Innishonna's shady grove his lot
 Now cast? His warrior mind such infamy
 Can ne'er permit.¹

ON Morven's shore the dawn at last appears.
 Morannal's stronghold, on a rocky height,
 A dark and towering form, now proudly rears
 Itself against the clearer, brighter light

Of eastern sky. Beneath is mist-veiled sea.
 Oihonna, sea-born maid, thou art not here!
 Oh, where then dost thou dream apart? For he,
 Morannal, agèd king awaits. Draw near.

Awake, he sees not day. His eyes are dark
 With endless night. Thus Earth, in glad array
 They see not decked awaiting morn, nor mark
 Her, eager, flush for bridal kiss of Day.

The king now feels caress of waking breeze
 And hears the joyous sounds of early morn,

¹ See note 1.

The waterfowl on wing, the surge of seas.
Oihonna, haste! in splendour grows the dawn.

The maid who came from dark-blue seas draws near,
And like a gleam of light in Morven's vale
Doth she to aged Morannal now appear;
As thus she speaks :—" My king and father, hail !

On heather bank of Crona's stream I stood,
The sun sank to his rest in western skies,
The silent eve seemed strange : I gave my mood
Free rein, to see Night's tempting mystic eyes.

And thus Morannal, father, all too late
Did I arise; the chase had tired; but not
The dreamland glories that, with heart elate,
I gazed upon. Oihonna thee forgot

Too long. And yet Dunhormod's peak remains
Still dark, and weird and sombre is the fir
On steep hill-sides. My father, what explains
Thy haste? What wouldst thou? Wilt thou tell to her,

Who with thee stands, why she should come ere morn? "
With gentleness the aged king now laid
His withered hand within the maid's. " My Dawn,
My ray of morning light, art thou, O maid

Of Shelma's vale! Oh, lend to me thy sight
But for this day. For know, Oihonna, all
Shall soon be clear, to my blind eyes a light
Arise, and darkness fade. Naught shall appal

At eventide, when o'er the starry skies
In pallid clouds shall wander Shelma's king,
His eyes unveiled, and then there shall arise
The vision of his land. His sight shall wing

Its way by moonbeams' silver-quivering light,
That pours from heaven o'er all its hills and dales.
Oihonna, list ! I know of war's sad plight ;
From Innishonna come no idle tales

But true ; for great Hjalmar, mighty, bold,
The hero of the sagas, now is here
With many Lochlin men of arms. His cold
And threatening greeting was, when he drew near—

This daring eagle from the misty north—
' Arise, renowned chief of Morven ; call
Thy people now to arms. Let them come forth
To meet me and my men. Ere o'er thy hall

The day in fulness breaks, the north-wind strong
Shall bear across the waves my dark storm-cloud
Of sails to thine own trembling shores and throng.'"
Thus spake the king. Oihonna then aloud

Replied ; as flush o'erspread her maiden cheek :—
" Why threatens then Oihonna's hero bold
Fair Morven's land ? My agèd father, speak."
" Hjalmar claims my treasure. Be it told

Of her that bards have loudly sung her praise.
And this has fired Hjalmar's ardour warm,
For he desires, responsive to their lays,
To take her now with battle and by storm.

My well-loved daughter, this was then his boast :—
' Across the seas I've roamed to smiling lands
To mist-veiled icy shores and rock-bound coast
Repellent regions here, there sunny lands ;

Where'er I wandered there I ever heard
In song and saga thy fair daughter's name ;

There grieved rejected suitor, or there stirred
In restless memory, some poor weakling, tame

Of spirit, who in sadness bore his fate.
In wrath I vowed to win the scornful maid;
Take heed, Morannal, ere it is too late
To shield thy daughter. 'Tis alone with blade

Of sword Hjalmar woos.' " Again the king :—
" Alas, the day is past, when Crona's heath
Saw sturdy Trenmor's men; the men who bring
Their life-blood freely to the fray; whose sheath

For sword is heart of foe. On sandy bed
For Lochlin's champions soon a grave had found
As wave sinks on the shore. His high, proud head
Had by Morannal then, howe'er renowned

Been brought down low. Alas ! Morannal's hour
Hath passed. His light hath gone; his arm is weak,
His battles in the distance fade. His power
Hath vanished, and no longer can he seek

The stalwart foe. Is Morven's honour bright?
And can her warrior-sons their blood still shed
With joy? Can Gall with flashing arrow's light
Send speedy death? And Clesamor imbed

His spear in haughty foe? And Rurmar too,
The bard of Fingal's hall? Canst thou with flash
Of blade on shining helmet, foes make rue
Their unprovoked assault, and courage rash?

Methinks I hear a sound like clash of steel
Round Lora's shores. Oihonna, quickly tell
What meaneth all this tumult, for I feel
That Shelma's hosts now march to war. 'Tis Well."

Oihonna seems entranced, her gaze afar.
Some spell of import strange holds her in thrall.
A rosy shimmering light that naught can mar
To her now blows, o'er hill and dale, o'er all.

" I see a host, O father, now descend
From yonder mountain heights with menace strange
Of thunder, and of wind, to which must bend
Each mighty tree. I see the endless change

Of waves upon the shore, though calm the sea.
The sun now lifts himself in glowing light,
The deep is tremulous with brilliancy,
And heaven is bursting now with glory bright."

A smile of sorrow marks the agèd face,
But soon he stands erect, in spirit strong.
He knows that soon shall end his earthly race,
And thus his noble lips burst forth in song :—

" O heaven's King, all hail ! To thee be praise
And greeting from my soul, Thou Ruler great
Of all the shining stars ! My voice I raise
In high adoring, O thou uncreate !

Thou ! glorious sun ; that ever young remains
Above this poor and saddened, withering world,
Thou wert of old my joy : my soul retains
Its ardour, though Life's scroll is almost furled.

Thy light is mirrored in my memory still,
Though earthly sight so long hath passed away ;
In dust and darkness is my body, ill,
But to my inmost soul 'tis ever day.

Hide not thy face, thou heavenly King and guide
Should agèd Morannal's sons be awed by spear.

Oh, deign to pardon all offence, nor chide
In wrath, for aught that fails us this day here.

My sons ! Gall, king of chase, and Clesamor
The bold whom sword hath ofttimes proved ; and thou
Rurmar, whose fame is song ; go forth to war
And this day nobly fight. Your strength must now

Be shewn for honour of great Fingal's race,
Whose heroes trod the steps ye tread to-day ;
For earthly things shall perish, not a trace
Remain ; but deeds of glory live always.

And thus 'tis bliss and ecstasy to die ;
To fall exultant in the strong embrace
Of mighty Death, as heroes fall and lie,
With flash like blaze of lightning, and with face

And soul for aye undaunted. This it is
That makes the vict'ry, e'en though heroes fall.
Alas for me ! For age no longer this
Allows. Life's flame is flick'ring. Soon 'twill all

Be spent, or lie in ashes hid, forgot.
Why lingereth now Fjalar's son ? Hath he
In Innishonna's shady groves, his lot
Now cast ? His warrior mind such infamy

Can ne'er permit. Hjalmar, he whose vow
Is sacred to him, and who shall fulfil
Its letter if he may. But list ! For now
I hear the rush of waves. My soul doth thrill

With murmur of the northern winds that fly
With strengthening wings, and, passing, touch mine ear."
The maid replies :—" From darkest shore draws nigh
Strange night. The timid sun-ray now doth fear

To fleck the rolling waves with golden light.
The clouds come on apace. The sea is black.
Against Garmalla's rocky granite height
Then dash the angry waves. The wild storm-wrack

Appears. The foam-crowned waves with thundering
roar

Now hurl themselves, in fury of the gale,
Against the cliff-bound, wild and rocky shore.
The bending pine-trees seem about to fail,

And broken lie beneath the fierce assault.
No sail can I discern. And yet beneath
That distant sable cloud, in heaven's vault,
I see the dark a transient flash bequeath

To us, a glimmer like the wing of bird."
The maid then silent stood, and soon the gale
In furious strength the stronghold shook and stirred,
With weird and mighty roar, and shrieking wail.

Now hissing, thundering, sighing, white-topped waves
Break wildly on the shore. The lightning-flash,
That from the angry clouds bursts forth, now laves
The heavens with dazzling purple light. The crash

Of thunder follows, and the echoes roll
Amidst the heavens now dark. The strange wild sound
Surpasses whirlwind. At each blaze the scroll
Of heaven unfolds, as now the scene around

Is lurid for a moment brief : then dark.
Then spake the King of Morven :—" Such a storm
It was, when thou, Oihonna, cam'st. The spark
Of life was in thy weeping little form

When from the stormy sea I brought thee here,
The outlaw Darg, forsaken, hated, feared,

Who sought his prey on seas afar and near
Had close to Morven's happy shores appeared.

In wrath, I followed then this pirate bold,
But he to tarry did not dare, and sailed
Away. As evening fell I saw the cold
And threatening outlines of his ship and hailed

And challenged him. But then a tempest rose
In fury such as now appears. The flash
Of purple lightning blazed; the cold wind froze
And tore to shreds his sails. Then Darg did gnash

His teeth. My ship unhurt through flying scud
Then quickly reached him. 'Twas by Fate decreed
My sword should not be sullied by his blood.
From sombre cloud the vivid lightning, freed,

Had come. His ship ablaze still held him. There,
Untouched, he stood in sullen silence, grim,
Beside his helm. The leaping flames bid fair
To overwhelm him, though his shield, all dim

With smoke, kept them at bay. His sinewy arm
Held fast a child. With anxious look he gazed
Till I to windward came, away from harm
Of flame, a bow-shot off. In fury blazed

The seething furnace, into which he threw
His shield; then holding firm the child, a leap
He took. The billows wild raged on. Anew
The lightnings flashed, as o'er the angry steep

Of hissing waves, the fiery ship withdrew.
Darg, struggling in the cruel icy sea
Held high his burden, and the moments flew
While he was gasping in his agony.

His need was great. I rescued him, and there
I saw thee first, a tender little child,
Unhurt by wave or flame, Oihonna fair;
And thou did'st weep. Thy trembling was beguiled

To peace against his face and breast. That face
Was sullen, calm, as he lay on the deck,
A dying man, with singèd hair. His race
Was well-nigh run. And ghastly pale, like fleck

Of cloud, he spake :—' O King, I pass from hence ;
I am content, to disappear, for aye,
In dark Oblivion's lap : and my offence
To purge. For her I now beseech, and nigh

My end, remember she alone doth care.
She is not of my blood. My life's deep stain
I leave to none as my bequest, nor share
The ill-starred mem'ries of existence vain.

One wild tempestuous sombre Yule-tide night,
I lay for shelter under Vidar's rock,
By King Fjalar's stronghold's rugged height.
I rescued from the wave, half-dead with shock,

And almost frozen, this fair winsome child.
Be therefore not unkind to her, for she
Hath nature that the bards extol, a mild
And noble soul. Her life I gladdened.' He

Then passed away." Oihonna's eyes were filled
With tears, as ended thus the King his tale.
But soon with other sight her soul was thrilled,
For war-cries now were heard above the gale ;

Above the wild and surging howling storm.
They listened to the clash of arms, and cry

Of Morven's sons. She saw the stalwart form
Of great Hjalmar, King of Ocean, nigh

Approaching, o'er the sombre waves that rolled
With thund'rous crash upon the troubled shore.
Now Morven's sturdy warriors, proud, strong souled
Sped swift to meet him, and in battle roar

To test his boastful challenge. Quick to land
Then sprang Hjalmar, with his warriors brave,
And hurled themselves, like billows on the strand,
Against the ranks of Morven. As the wave

In tumult crashes on the rocky shore
So came their charge with fury, and their blood
By Shelma's sons was freely let. As pour
The waves, through crannied nooks in rushing flood,

So were their wounds. Entranced Oihonna stood.
For there—strange sight—before her eyes, she saw
Her noble hero ! He whose image would
In mystic dreamland, ever thrill and awe

Her inmost soul. With eager earnest look
She followed every movement, as he burst
Through Morven's serried ranks, for none could brook
His urgent onslaught. None could stay his thirst

For mighty effort, thus, against his foes.
Morannal's warriors quickly then gave place
To Lochlin's hosts, whom none may well oppose
And now no more the warriors, face to face,

The death-wounds give ; the carnage now is stayed
" Oihonna," said the king, " thy lips are mute ;
Say why the clash of sword is long delayed
And battle roar ! To what shall I impute

This silence strange? Is Morven's honour lost? ”
Oihonna answered then ;—“ O father ! he,
Hjalmar, soon shall meet his fate at cost
Of life, and seal his doom in agony,

A bloodless shadow in the clouds above !
Behold, he sways ; beneath his helmet crushed
The three, thy sons, he meets alone, in love
Of desp'rate combat ; other strife is hushed.

And all stand mute, in wonder and amaze
To see Hjalmar meet his foes, the three,
Gall, Rurmar, Clesamor. For like a blaze
Sparks fly from Rurmar's brand right merrily.

And Gall now charges him with spear, and dyed
With crimson is Clesamor's sword,—the blood
Of Hjalmar.” Then Morannal's look did chide ;
His brow grew dark ; and with his shield he stood

And striking it, bade now the battle hold.
“ Ye sons of old Morannal, let not shame
E'er sully Morven's land. The years have rolled
O'er me, your father and your king. My name

With honour and with pride, has been upheld
Throughout my years. And will ye thus disgrace
Our land in strife unequal, though impelled
By onslaught of our foe? Bold Fingal's race

Must this avoid. Let not our honour's wings
Thus now be sullied, nor in Lochlin's land
The Sagas tell the shame that ever clings
To memories of a strife, where one with band

Of three contends. ‘ Hjalmar nobly fell,’
The bards will sing, ‘ outnumbered by the sons

Of Morven's king.' Up Gall ! Let no one tell
This to our shame. Be thou the first who runs

With ardour to contend." And thus alone
His buckler to the fore, went Gall to fight
'Gainst Lochlin's hero bold. His dying groan
Soon followed as he lay, and from his sight

All earthly light now passed. With youthful glow
He fought, and fell with honour, as the wave
That leaps on rocky crag falls back, to flow
Again to ocean vast. " Who now shall save

Fair Shelma's honour? Rurmar, swiftly play
Thy part in feats of arms with Hjalmar strong.
Oh Rurmar, born for peace, not war, essay
Thy strength with his. Thy life has been but song

And dreams of sorrow and of pain." But now
He fights like flame of torch against the winds.
'Tis no avail ; his fury ends ; his brow
Is knit in death-pain ; and at last he finds .

His bosom cooled for aye, to life and song.
Clesamor youngest, had been early seen
Among the men of Morven, with his strong
Right arm. He fought with hero-wrath and mien.

His eye shot flaming glances, threat'ning, dire ;
His brothers' deaths he would avenge : the play
Of flashing sword, would with his soul conspire
To wipe away dishonour, and to slay

Hjalmar, who had shed upon the shore
The blood of Gall and Rurmar, flowing still.
And steel doth clash with steel, while blood doth pour,
From wounds of either hero. Yet the thrill,

And shining steel support their pride and joy.
And Morven heareth, once again, the sounds
That were the wondrous charm, without alloy,
Of Ossian's glorious days. Clesamor bounds,

With fierce attack, now towards his foe : he fails :
Hjalmar stays his hand. He will not strike
The death-blow, for his heart relents. He hails
Clesamor thus :—" Bold youth, desist ; I like

Not thus to slay ; for bards shall tell thy fame.
Thy glorious morn of life I fain would spare.
Come, give thy hand in pledge, and know thy name
Shall yet be great : thou art a warrior rare."

A blow, with flat of sword, Clesamor gave
As answer : combat thus again began
And soon Clesamor fell, and blood did lave
His eyes. The bitter anguished tears now ran

From fair Oihonna's eyes. Why weepest thou ?
'Twas not thy hero who was slain, thou maid
From dark-blue billowy seas. " To Fate we bow,"
She said to aged Morannal. " We have stayed

Alone together, and are left alone
To grieve, and wait the victor's word and will.
On Morven's rocky shore I hear the groan
Of wind and wave. For all thy sons are still

And sleep the sleep of death." Her words were done.
The troubled look on aged Morannal's brow
Had passed, like clouds from heaven. No tears shall run,
That Fate hath been unkind, severe. And now

He said :—" Oihonna, I may go to meet
The spirits of my sires, in land of cloud ;

And fearlessly. With fame unstained I'll greet
Them all, and need not shamèd hide, nor shroud

My face, when bravest Fingal comes across
My path. Oihonna, I would rest in peace
With Shelma's chiefs; near where the waves now toss
Their mighty heads on shingle, sleep. Surcease

Of trouble now hath come. Then o'er us raise
A stony cairn to mark our resting-place.
In this fair land of song, the land whose lays
Are known to every bard. And now my race

Is ended. Follow then to glorious deeds
The noble stranger, now victorious here.
And keep Morannal's memory bright. There needs
Must be this change. I pass to other sphere."

The aged head now fell upon his breast.
One gasp of pain; then closed the sightless eyes.
His face majestic shone. And now at rest
His body is. His soul soars to the skies.

CANTO V

We are but clods
Of Earth and weak. And shall we vainly strive
Against their might and power? In starry spheres
Ye dwell and soar, and laugh when men contrive
And plot to rule o'er Fortune.¹

GREAT King Fjalar, aged and silent now
And hoary grown, sat in his lofty hall.
The years had their effect, and on his brow
Had written their record, with its recall

¹ See note 1.

Of former days; when deep the breeze he drank
On cooling seas, and viewed the rugged land.
The Sun had risen bright, from gold-edged bank
Of cloud on ocean vast. He felt expand

His heart, as sunbeams, flooding bright the scene.
Illumed his spacious royal hall, and graced—
As in the days of yore—the land. With keen
And lightsome joyous heart, he then retraced

His steps in memory's treasure-house, and told
The tales of days long past, while in the ring
He sat of warriors grey; who well of old
Had fought in desp'rate wars, around which cling

The records of their fame. The king then paused
And rose from off his throne. "The days of power
Are fleet and retrospect is long. Uncaused
Is fate, except by our own will. The hour

Has come, when I would see my land once more :
Take me to noble Telmar's highest peak,
For I would see my goodly work before
I pass away : the bliss my will did seek.

Bring here my sword. And now alone one deed
Remains for this my withered arm. The lay
Of King Fjalar aye must end indeed,
In keeping with his fame. No other way

Exists for him who ever victory won."
Thus with his trusty sword, the agèd king
To Telmar's airy height ascended. None
Had e'er beheld a scene, where joy of spring

Was greater, or the summer richer, yet
More fair. In silence deep he gazed. The bright

Warm beams shone o'er the basking vales beset
With limpid lakes, like jewels flashing light.

The azure-tinted rivers wound between
The grassy hills, and ripe were warring fields,
With golden harvests. All his wide demesne
Seemed glad and grateful, as a maid who yields

With upturned face to agèd honoured sire
Affection's fervent tribute. And with tears
His eyes were dimmed. His heart, with joyous fire
Now beat exultant, and his many years

Seemed naught. "It is enough, for I have seen
My work and vow fulfilled. A fertile land
Have I now made, where my great sires, though keen
Of purpose, all had failed. Alone I stand

Commander of my will. Those fields of green
And gold, no ploughshare e'er had touched before
My reign; and all those homes, that grace the scene
With joy, had never been. All this good store

Is purpose, now fulfilled." And then he stood
In silence, grand, and from the warriors near
Aged Sjolff, brave, stepped forth in sombre mood;
His brow was clouded, but without a fear

Was he, for sooth must Sjolff speak. "This learn,
O king! Thy sinews fail, in thy bent form
Scarce aught of what thou wert can I discern,
But shadow of thy former self. As storm

Wert thou in mighty strength, now art thou old
And feeble. Art thou self-sufficing then?
Did'st thou create the verdant field and fold?
Then could'st thou well renew thy life again.

Be humble, O Fjalar, to the Gods !
 For all thy boasted strength and mighty power
 Were gifts of highest heaven. We are but clods
 Of earth. 'Twas Freya's wondrous bounteous dower

That clothed the vales with verdure. And 'twas He,
 The great All-father, that ensured such peace
 For this thy land.¹ The towering strength that we
 So well did know, O King, and all increase

Of might was given thee by Thor. Thy moods
 And power, and self, were naught in every strife
 But for his aid. As tree in trackless woods
 Thou too could'st fall unheeded. All thy life

Is naught without the Gods." Thus Sjolf spake.
 Fjalar pondered long, then said in calm
 Defiant mood :—" Thou speakest, for my sake,
 Of beings now, whom none behold. Embalm

Such dream-vagaries in thy memory's shades ;
 I trust them not. Mine own great will and heart
 Do all suffice, and were my stay ; nor fades
 My will e'en now. Men were subdued. My part

I played, and from the Gods I grasped the helm
 Of fortune, and I mocked their wrath and threat.
 'Tis true that I am bent, and in the realm
 Of age, wear silvered hair as crown : and yet

I falter not. For much hath ceased to be
 That once was here. Such is the course of things,
 But yet, among all change, there still to me
 Remains the heart that conquers, and that flings

Away all fear, all greatness, and all joy
 And life itself. My task is done, for I

¹ See note 5.

Fjalar, now shall die, and shall employ
My last few earthly moments well." On high

He lifts his sword. His royal mantle now
He quick discards, and bares his scarrèd breast,
The glittering steel was bright : his rugged brow
Was calm. His flashing eye did then invest

His mien with awe, as with a joyous look
The steel he greeted. " Where," he loudly cried,
" Oh, where is Dargar, he who undertook
To meet me at the end, when I defied

And scorned the counsel of the Gods? Doth he
In sooth yet hear their words? And pierce both time
And space, and scan the ages yet to be?
Were he a seer, wise and great, sublime

As was his boast, then he must truly know
Mine hour hath come. He pledged his sacred word
To meet my sword ere I great Death's dark blow
Should feel!" Behold! The boastful king hath stirred :

His look is grave. A shade appears beneath
And glides now through the vale with tardy pace.
Ascending then the mount, it seems the sheath
Of some mysterious form. And face to face

It stands before Fjalar, whose amaze
Is written clearly there. He speechless sits
And nerveless sink his hands ; as when the blaze
Of lightning doth appal. He now submits

In awe. And in the dark and shadowy form
That stands before the king, is Dargar seen!
" I waited for this hour. Before the storm
The tree is bent ; so hast thy body been

With age ; for thou, O king, art frail and old.
Hast thou achievèd all ? Thy vow fulfilled ?
And turned the path of life with spirit bold ?
And governed all that Gods have vainly willed

And shaped all to thine ends ? ” With scorn then smiled
The king. “ By what strange errant chance and breath
Of wind, hath now my uttered summons mild
Thus reached thine ear ? Enough ! Thou’rt come.
What saith

Fjalar now, in answer to thy words ?
But this :—My life did I myself direct ;
My rule hath prospered, not the rule of Gods.
The land thou viewest, how was it bedecked

Ere I came in my pòwer ? ’Twas mine to will
It all to war, to harrow and destroy
And waste throughout, till no leaf stirred, or till
It was as naught. Behold, what good employ

There is in well-tilled field ! The verdant mead
Replaces trackless forest, where the wild
And savage beasts did roam. The land I freed
From terror. Fields are covered now with mild

And richer life, where mighty oceans drove
The summer rain. The dews now freely give
The wealth that grew from blood. No longer rove
Untempered o’er the earth, the men that live

By sword. And none there be that dare extol
The reckless berserk. Now, reign other powers :
Where violence held sway, doth law control ;
And peaceful crafts are honoured. Happy hours

Are praised ; and rule and order. Justice now
Contrives to live, by my command. Then say,

O prophet of the shadow-realms, my vow
Hath been fulfilled? What of thy threat? The day

Hath *not* arrived that great Fjalar's son
Hath wed his only sister, and brought shame
To my grey hairs. The threats of Gods need none
Appal. For in the deep blue sea, the name

Of Gerda, daughter, rests in peace for aye.
With mighty hand Hjalmar conquers all,
And roams o'er billows wide. His fame doth fly
To every land. But list ! I do recall

An uncompleted vow. My time is short :
Draw near, O Dargar, for I crave redress
In blood, for that thy lie is last resort
Of proffered insult, and thou must confess

It false." Then Dargar bent his searching gaze
Upon the king and answered thus :—" 'Tis soon
That my deliv'rance comes, the end of days
Of Life's great burden. Know, O King, a boon

For me is Death. For I have known enough
Of human fate, of sorrow and of joy.
Such respite as I ask, is that rebuff
Shall yet be thine. For pride, shall yet alloy

Be found. And thus 'tis for thy sake alone
I say :—" Let vengeance stay.' Thy son is near,
Hjalmar cometh ; mighty warrior grown ;
His father's pride ; success shall soon appear

To great Fjalar." Speaking thus his hand
Was stretched now towards the sea. Exulting, cry
Fjalar's warriors. " See ! Quite near our land
Are Gauthiod's galleys. Lo, Hjalmar's nigh."

Like sea-bird's swiftest flight, Hjalmar came.
Each moment, o'er the foaming billows, flies
The glittering fleet. The warriors now exclaim
With joyous shouts. But King Fjalar's eyes

Are gloomy, as he stands in deepest thought.
And mute, beholding from the bold high peak
His son's approach. But Dargar's eye is fraught ;
With warning strange. The King doth speak :—

“ I had not hoped to see Hjalmar's face,
For it was told that he was far away.
But on this day of Death, I seem to trace
Aye, wonder after wonder ! Who shall say

What else shall be, when I shall say farewell
To this my life ? Hjalmar, thou did'st name ;
'Tis well, for he shall witness all, and tell
How false was Dargar. Him shall I acclaim

Our judge.” Nor sooner had the great king said
These words, than he, Hjalmar, all unarmed
Appeared upon the rocky height ; his head
Unhelmed ; without his shining shield. Alarmed

Were all the warriors. Pale was Hjalmar's face,
As when the moon her cold and silvery light
Pours forth upon the snowy drifts, that trace
Their weirdest phantom-forms in ghastly night.

His hand was grasping, too, a bloody sword,
His eyes were anguished with his soul's great pain.
“ My son, be welcome ! ” was Fjalar's word
Of earnest greeting, “ and although I'd fain

Have seen thee other than appears, my joy
Thou art, be whatsoe'er thy mien. Speak, son,

And tell us all thy fortune and employ !
'Twas full of battles hardly fought, but won

We know. And yet thy lips are trembling, pale.
Dost thou now bear a wound that blanches so
Thy cheek and gives thee look so wan and frail ?
Speak, son ! ” “ My father, I would have thee know

That I have many a battle fought and won,
And that, although I had no arms to fight,
My well-proved breastplate ne'er was pierced. And
none

Hath conquered me. Yet must I now recite

Mine anguish and despair. My heart now bleeds,
And I would ever hide my face in shame ;
Nor can I brook thy gaze. And yet I needs
Must tell thee all, while yet I live. My fame

The bards have sung. They tell of my renown ;
And though my years are few, my name is great.
Yet am I crushed and broken, and my crown
Of hope is gone. For king I did create

Myself, of mighty seas ; thus was I called.
I flew like storms across the oceans vast ;
I broke the stiff-necked, where their burdens galled ;
Took crowns from kings, and thus their glory passed.

Then Lora's shore I reached, Morannal's realm,
The land of bards and song. His daughter's praise
Was loudly sung, and I did overwhelm
His warriors bold, that I might see and gaze

Upon the fairest maid. The king was blind
And thus he stayed within his castle high.
I slew in battle all his sons. The wind
Bore me away with Shelma's maid, whom I

Then knew as fair Oihonna. She my bride
Became; our nuptials on the foaming sea
Were held. My king and father, shall I hide
From thee our wondrous joy? There cannot be

A bliss more deep than with her I have known;
As pure as heaven and boundless rich as earth.
All victory, all the past, like shadows flown,
Have seemed to be, and pale, and nothing worth

In every hour of joy. And thus springtide
Did waft my vessels softly o'er the seas.
On sunny joyous waves we then did glide;
Anew, our life was born, with every breeze.

My father! Bliss, so pure and great, it seemed
Must heavenward go to realms of Gods above,
And yet was sorrow near; of this we dreamed
How little, in our joyous fervent love.

Together, she and I, on one dark night
Were standing by the helm. A lonely star
Above kept watch, and on us shed its light.
Our hands were clasped. 'O Hjalmar, thou art far

Too dear. Why did'st thou so become? For e'en
From childhood's early days I seemed to know
Thou wert my hero. Thou hast truly been
The lord of my poor heart, before the glow

Of perfect vision came. Oh that it had
Remained as then! Then might I hope to hide
What I have ever dreaded, lest in mad
And wilting scorn, and royal hero-pride,

Thou should'st have spurned my hand. For I was then
Concernèd more with mine own bliss than thine.

Morannal's daughter I was called ; and when
Thou camest 'twas his name I placed with mine

As father ; and 'twas thus, as royal-born,
That I became thy bride. I cannot hide
It longer from thee, though it cost thy scorn ;
I can endure and suffer if thou chide,

But never can deceive thee, Hjalmar ; no,
I love thee truly now. Who was my sire
I cannot tell ; it may, for aught I know
Be sooth, that all the ever-glowing fire

I feel for thee, is blood of slave base-born.
For once when Yule-tide gale did rage, beneath
Great Vidar's cliff, upon thy rugged, torn
And native shore, where mighty waters wreathe

Themselves in strangest forms, a child was flung
Into the seething billows, but was saved.'
My father, hear me still ; for she who clung
To me, my ocean-bride, Oihonna, braved

The wildest danger. Ah, alas thou dost
Discern her blood upon my trusty sword !
For she it was, thy daughter e'en, who must
Away to Death's dark door. My sister's word

To thee was :—' Greeting.' This I bring. She breathed
No more, for she had died for me.'" His steel
Flashed forth with lightning swiftness. Then it sheathed
Itself within his breast. Thus did he seal

His doom, and end his anguished life. To rest
He sank upon the rugged crag. Then sped
The hours. And in the glorious peaceful west
The sun went down. Fjalar sat. His head

Was bent; and cold, and still as marble, stayed
His rigid form, His thoughts none ever knew.
With grief and terror all his warriors made
A place for aged Sjolf : Dargar too

Stood at Fjalar's side and saw the strife
Within him. Now in western sky a glow
Of golden light o'erspread the heavens. All life
Seemed fair, enriched by some mysterious flow

Of subtle light. Fjalar then his eyes
Raised up on high. "Eternal, mighty Gods!
I do submit my will. From wondrous skies
Ye know I have defied. We are but clods

Of earth, and weak. And shall we vainly strive
Against your will and might? In starry spheres
Ye dwell and soar, and laugh when men contrive
And plot to rule o'er fortune. Power inheres

E'en in your lightest breath. We boast in vain
For though as firm as granite rock, man's will
Is naught to that of Gods', and none can reign
But ye, and none oppose." The air was still.

Aloft his heavy sword he swung. A hand,
Of power unseen, did gently lay its touch
Upon him. Neither will, nor strong command
Can lift it now. He, broken, weepeth much.

"Ye tempests wild, and roaring winds, and wave
Of all devouring sea, Gods speak, and mild
Ye have become. A fleet, we may not save,
It is engulfed; and yet a little child

All frail and helpless, man can ne'er destroy
Unless ye will it. For I know your power.

And humbly bend. Life's interest and its joy
And earthly glory now, are gone. Mine hour

Has come. I go to you, O Gods on high,
Whose glorious might and wisdom now I dread ! ”
'Twas thus Fjalar spake, as eve drew nigh ;
And with his sword in hand, he fain must tread

The lonely path on which is no return.
Then deep-cut runes he makes upon his breast
From whence Life's crimson currents run. Thus stern
He falls, upon Hjalmar's corpse, to rest.

.

The northern summer eve is very still.
And peace reigns gently over land and sea.
Fjalar's life hath passed, for good or ill
In quiet sleep, for all eternity.

II. PARAPHRASES OF FINNISH POEMS

I. THE DREAM

As I lie upon my couch reclining,
Seeking respite from my grief and pining;
Comes a voice from dreamland, softly sighing;
With a whispered message, sweetly crying :—

“ Ah ! awake thou dear one, haste and meet me,
For with burning kisses I shall greet thee.”
Happy I awake, and sleep is vanished.

But the dream-scene like a wraith is fading
And the maid seems now but ghostly shading !
Ah, the kisses lost ; in Elfland vanished !

JOHAN LUDVIG RNEBERG.

2. TO FREYA¹

No glittering gems can tempt me, nor Afric's gold and pelf,
Nor pearls of shining ocean, enshrined on nacreous shelf;
But Freya's heart assails me, and takes me captive, too;
Whene'er I see those eyes of hers, that glisten like the dew !

How vain are earthly riches, how poor beyond compare;
Though suns of gold were glowing, they're naught to
Freya fair;

The diamond's flashing brilliance is cold, and poor its
charms,

To radiance of my spirit, with Freya in my arms.

¹ The original is “ To Frigga.” But, as the name is cacophonous in English, I have preferred “ Freya.”

For Freya is not earthly ; but like the summer sky,
Her beauty is celestial, and cometh from on high,
Like evening glow of cloudland, when lovely tints adorn,
Like aureoled light and gleaming, like glowing bloom of
morn !

All thought and vision vanish, when in her eyes I gaze ;
Unfathomed deeps I see there, of love-light and amaze ;
And naught can stay my dreaming, but her touch of finger-
tips ;
Or joy from heaven's chalice ; the kisses from her lips.

Ah ! what dear angel sent her such glorious presence fair ?
Who moulded her in beauty ? and gave her charms so rare ?
Who was it fashioned Freya, in happiness to shine ?
Who sent her for adorning of this poor life of mine ?

And if my way doth darken, and cruel thorns do pierce ;
And fetters wound my spirit, and make it hard and fierce ;
Ah then I'll swiftly hasten to her dear arms again,
Forgetting all my sorrows in Freya's loving chain !

Then earthly things shall harass no more through vagrant
mind,
For, like the world in springtime, such glory shall I find,
That all life's galling fetters shall be as trifles light,
And, waking or in slumber, my dreams shall e'er be bright.
JOHAN LUDVIG RONEBERG.

3. THE FIRST KISS

THROUGH the fleecy cloud-drift the Star of Evening, gleam-
ing,
Heard a maiden whisper, in shady boskage dreaming—
“ Tell me, Star of Evening, what is thought above
When the kiss first given is the kiss of Love ? ”

Then came answer quickly, with a great delight :—
“ Ah, if Love has prompted, glowing through the eyes,
Angels see the Vision that in glory lies ;
But dark Death is heavy ; that, to him, is Night.”

JOHAN LUDVIG RNEBERG.

4. LOVE'S ENSNARING

FROM her love-tryst came a maiden
And her hands were red and glowing.
“ Why art thou, my little maiden,
In thine hand such colour showing ? ”
Thus the mother, as she lingers :—
“ Ah ! the rose-thorns hurt my fingers.”

FROM her love-tryst came a maiden ;
Flushed of face, her lips like cherries.
“ Why red lips, my little maiden ? ”
“ Ah dear mother ! red-ripe berries.”

FROM her tryst, once more the maiden.
White her face : her mother grieving :—
“ Why thus wan and sorrow-laden ? ”
“ Mother dear, 'twas but deceiving ;
Falsely hath my lover spoken ;
I must to my grave, heart-broken.”

“ Ah, my cross ! ” wept then the maiden :—
“ When in Death's deep peace I'm lying,
Write these words :—‘ There came a maiden
To her tryst, the world defying.
Ah, her hands glowed red with pressing,
And her lips knew love's confessing :
Then her wan face, dark despairing,
Told of faithless man's ensnaring.’ ”

JOHAN LUDVIG RNEBERG.

5. THE STAR

HIGH in heaven it brightly glows,
Looking on earth's wastes and snows.
Vivid blaze in sapphire set,
So resplendent glittering, yet
Cold and chill as dark Death's sweat.

Soul, despairing, in its woe
Finds no solace from that glow,
Cold and reckless in the sky ;
It is watching, there on high,
Human joy and anguished cry.

Ah ! 'tis haughty, distant, far,
In its glow :—the glittering star !
Could it only tender be,
Ah, how happy then were we !
But it has not sympathy.

LARS STENBÄCK.

6. THE GOLDEN LEAVES ARE FALLING

THE golden leaves are falling,
And Autumn's blossoms die ;
To his long sleep they're calling
The bright-winged butterfly ;

The Autumn winds are roaring,
O'er forest, lake, and mere ;
And Summer's rich outpouring
Will die through frost severe.

But human hearts are jaying
Though Winter's grave is near ;
The peasant's harvest buoying
His hope, while days are drear.

VOICES OF THE NORTH

What though all things are lying,
Slow-fading, mortal-wise ;
Our God above's undying,
In everlasting skies.

No Autumn ever faded
To Winter cold and grey,
But Spring was there, though shaded ;
His buds were hidden away ;

No Night with darkness hovers,
But glorious comes the dawn ;
Sad Death but only covers
Fair resurrection's morn.

All Goodness is eternal,
The great God willed it so.
And in the land supernal,
An endless life we'll know.

'Tis but in earthly dawning,
It sometimes seems to hide ;
In Heaven's bright glorious morning
'Twill with us e'er abide.

ZAKRIS TOPELIUS.

7. THE MIGHT OF PAIN

WOULD we really gaily laugh ?
Then life's bitter we must quaff.
Would our eyes intensely gleam ?
They must look on Sorrow's stream.
Would we touch of tears in voice ?
Then deep grief must be our choice.
Would we with another joy ?
Suffering must our dross destroy.

Cold as ice, those frozen lips,
When each but of pleasure sips :
No deep lustre shines from eyes
That ne'er knew Grief's sad surprise :
Toneless as dark earth the voice
That willed only to rejoice :
On a breast we can but shiver
If it know not ache and quiver.

JAKOB TEGENGREN.

8. THE WHITE-WINGED BIRD

ON an Autumn eve, as the zephyrs stirred
With ripples the silent mere,
The Sun went down ; and a strange white bird
Flew swift to the waters clear.

And she folded her wings ; and rested a space
On the sombre surface then ;
And the fair white wings in their spotless grace,
Were mirrored there, in the fen.

Then with sweep of wing her flight she made.
To the forest dark and drear ;
And the night fell silent o'er fen and glade,
And the stars shone in the mere.

To the dreamer came in the evening's peace,
The strange and white-winged bird ;
As the stars of heaven brought sweet surcease
Of unrest. And his soul was stirred.

And the whirring wings, like the whispering wind,
He heard in the silent night ;
And the touch of caress on his face could find
Like the zephyr, or eider-down, light.

Ah ! the call of the bird, with its wings of white,
 Was the strange great call of Love ;
 And its sound, to the dreamer's soul that night,
 Was like fountains of joy above.

And that strange white bird to the dreamer's soul,
 Seemed bright as the shining stars ;
 But she flew away to a little knoll ;
 Then to realms where there's naught that mars.

JAKOB TEGENGREN.

9. THE DREAMER'S THRENODY

A KING was I, and sceptred, crowned,
 A king in happy land of dreams,
 Of colours bright, and where all sound
 And music flowed in merry streams.
 Ah, Youth it was, my kingdom great
 Where all was bright ; in regal state !
 Ah Life ! 'twas thou, with robber hands,
 Who seized my sceptre ; wrecked my crown ;
 Who wasted all throughout my lands :
 O tyrant, thou of dread renown !
 Nor realms nor palace have I now ;
 My hands are empty, beggar-poor ;
 But one small thing thou didst allow,
 Though vagrant I o'er fen and moor ;
 I'll keep this token of the past,
 My Grief : I'll keep it to the last.

JAKOB TEGENGREN.

10. TWILIGHT

WHEN to rest the sun is setting,
 Hid by dark empurpled hill,
 And the thrush, his song forgetting,
 Sleeps, and dreamy eve is still ;

Then shall I, to wavelet's sighing,
Listen, at the islet's shore,
Hoping naught, and grief defying,
But remembering, evermore.

HJALMAR JOHANNES RONEBERG.

II. A SAGA

ON a mountain bold and rugged and weird,
Rode a goblin wild; and he laughed and leered.
But his eyes were cruel and fiercely glared
As down at the valleys he angrily stared.
For his brain was mad as his flashing eye;
In his hand a club, that he bore on high.

And his teeth gleamed white, as far and wide
He shouted his scorn, and the world defied.

"Ha! ha! Who questions my fame and right
Shall learn, in the Valley of Death, my might!
For the worlds themselves now cringe and cower;
I defy thee, Spirit! Thou unknown power!"

Through the great world then, the words rang loud;
O'er the Sun's bright face came a dark grey cloud.

And the flame-red wrath of his arrows fly,
While his lightning lance he lifts on high.
With his club, the impious goblin rash
Is hurled to doom in a blinding flash.

Though stricken, he shrieks as he falls in fight,
"Be he cursed for aye whose shafts are Light."

MIKAEL LYBECK.

12. AUTUMN

PAST is Summer's story ;
Winds howl fierce and loud ;
Forests change their glory ;
Heavens reveal but cloud.

Song-birds are lamenting
On the fading bough,
As if sad repenting
All their music, now.

And the flow'rets dying
Soon in Snow will lie,
While the sad wind, sighing,
Croons Death's lullaby.

KARL ROBERT MALMSTRÖM.

13. WAS IT BUT DREAM?

WAS it but fantasy of Spring
That I thy heart did fill?

A silenced lay
Of blithesome May
Whose notes re-echo still?

Was it a rose that then was given
In token of our troth?

A glittering tear
At parting, dear?
Was it but dream, to both?

Was it like meadow-lilies sweet,
But short-lived bloom of flower?

Whose beauty light
As fairy bright,
Fades as we feel its power?

Ah ! though it like the lily fade,
In tear-dimmed Night, I seem
 Again to hear,
 In accents clear,
Thy voice, my fairest dream !
 JOSEF JULIUS WECKSELL.

14. THE POLE-STAR

IN zenith skies, where strange auroras glow,
 In long dark night ;
Where trembling flames of curious colours flow
 With quivering light ;
And seem to flash and flicker on the snow,
 To shine and gleam ;
 I sleepless dream.

From space so great, that none may truly tell
 Its measure vast ;
I see the splendour of each hill and dell,
 The mere, that fast
Is frozen ; ev'ry crystal-glittering fell
 And forest white ;
 And rugged height.

With wild delight I see the fiercest gale,
 That icy sweeps
O'er fen and lake, o'er forest, hill or vale,
 O'er mighty deeps ;
I see the surge of rapid wild, and hail
 Its hiss and groan
 And thunder-tone.

On fairer summer-lands of softer grace
And brighter flowers
Shine other stars. 'Tis mine to glow on race
Where sterner hours
Give strength, on bold brave men who hardships face ;
With Odin's fire.
I these inspire.

EMIL VON QVANTEN.

III. ECHOES OF FINLAND¹

I. LULLABY

Sof, min älskling, ack, sof i ro, sof i ro !
Sof som fågeln uti sitt bo, i sitt bo !
Sof vid böljornas brus mot strand !
Nu blir natt öfver haf och land,
Nu blir natt öfver haf och land.—*Finnish lullaby.*²

Sleep, my darling, sleep and rest, sleep and rest !
Sleep like birdies in their nest, in their nest !
Sleep while waves beat on the strand !
Now comes Night o'er sea and land,
Now comes Night o'er sea and land.

BABY dearest, close thine eyes,
With their wonder and surprise ;
To his rest each birdie flies ;
Light is fading from the skies,
Fading, fading from the skies.

Sleep, my darling ; In the west
See, the sun has gone to rest !
Eyes of birdies in their nest
Now are closing ; darling, rest ;
Eyes then closing, darling, rest.

Mother's dearest, slumber well ;
In the land of sleep, they tell
How the fays of moor and dell
Watch my darling ; slumber well,
Tired darling, slumber well.

¹ See note 6.

² *Finnish* :

Nuku, nuku, mun ystävään, ystävään,
Nuku kuin lintu pesässään, pesässään
Nuku aaltonen rantahan lyö,
Päivä laskee jo joutuu yö,
Päivä laskee jo joutuu yö.

VOICES OF THE NORTH

Sleep, my treasure ; little guest
 That came here to mother's breast ;
 Sleep, my darling ; in their nest
 All the little birdies rest ;
 Tired little birdies rest.

Thou of dreamland's wonders know
 How its tides e'er ebb and flow ;
 Baby darling, soft and low
 Elfland's glories come and go,
 Fairy wonders come and go.

In the waves upon the shore,
 In the distant boom and roar,
 Elfland hears but music pour ;
 Darling, sleep in Elfland's shore ;
 Sleep in lovely Elfland's shore.

Softly, gently, sweetly sleep ;
 For thou'rt in the angels' keep ;
 Naught shall make my cherub weep ;
 Sleep, my darling tender, sleep ;
 Little bright-eyes, sweetly sleep.

2. TÚONI'S LAND¹

Tuuti lasta Tuonelahan,
 Alla nurmen nukkumahan,
 Tuonen lasten laulatella
 Manan neitojen pidellä !
 Tupa suuri Tuonelassa
 Manan majat avarat !—*Finnish cradle-song.*²

¹ See note 7.

² *Swedish* :

Liten pilt, mot drömmars möte
 Slumra hän i grafven's sköte !
 Dodens konung ömt skall sjunga
 För den lille sin slummersång,
 Jungfrur skola gossen vagga
 Uti dödens stora land.

Rocking into Túoni's realm
Beneath the grass sleeping,
Túoni's children are singing.
The Death-Lord's maidens hold thee !
The room is ample in Túoni's land ;
The Death-Lord's mansions are large !

Rock, my baby ; no more weeping ;
Now within thy bed lie sleeping ;
See, the great Túoni peeping,
While his maidens sing to thee !
They shall bear thee to his keeping ;
In his wide world, sing to thee.

Rock, my baby ; winds are sighing
As they wander on, undying ;
Underneath the ground, are lying
Pretty maids to sing to thee ;
In dark Túoni's land then spying
Let them play and sing to thee.

Rock, my baby ; rivers flowing
Murmur to thee, ever knowing
That they towards the sea are going
Where the maidens sing to thee :
There great Túoni's wonders showing
They shall dance and sing for thee.

Rock, my baby ; snow is falling ;
Hear the strange Túoni calling,
Hear his maids, with song enthralling,
They shall dance and play with thee,
With their voices rising, falling,
They shall sweetly sing to thee.

Rock, my baby ; snowflakes flying,
Silent play and dance, defying
Each the other ; never crying,

For great Túoni's maids to sing.
 All the dying winds are sighing :
 Come to Dreamland ; be its king.

3. ON ELFLAND'S STRAND

Ack, här vi sutto invid stranden af den svallande forsens fall,
 Där fåglar sjunga, där vågor brusa och vindar susa i björk och tall.¹
*Finnish folk-song.*²

ON the river's wave-washed shore,
 Where the foaming waters pour,
 With a mighty thunder-roar
 O'er the fall,
 We are sitting ; birds are flitting,
 Singing 'midst the pine-trees tall ;
 Whisp'ring all.

In the eddies and the foam
 How the pretty Naiads roam ;
 Rushing up, or back to home
 In the deep !
 See them creeping, slyly, peeping ;
 In their revels how they leap,
 Laugh, and weep !

Hear the roar and hiss and gush
 Of the water ; and its hush
 Ere it plunges with a rush
 O'er the fall ;
 Ever drifting, ever shifting,
 Rises spray in columns tall
 At the fall.

¹ Stanza 1.

² *Finnish* :

Sen ihanaisen virran reunall' hausk' ol' ennen ollaksen,
 Kun linut laulaa ja vesi pauhaa tuuli oksia häilyttää.

See the elfin-forms appear
In the moonlight, cold and clear,
As we listen to the drear
 Howl of wind ;
See them peering, as if fearing
Every shape in mist defined
 By the wind.

How they wrap the flying spray
Round themselves like garments gay,
As they dance their roundelay
 Elfinwise ;
Weirdly ranging all the changing
Forms that caper, sink, or rise
 In strange guise.

Look ! Their glimm'ring ghostly eyes
Seem to flash a wild surprise !
Now, they're laughing goblinwise
 In the dance.
Do they wonder at the thunder,
As the waters gleam and glance
 While they dance ?

Come, ye weird and elfin things,
With your glinting fairy wings,
In the silvery glow that clings
 To the mist ;
As the sighing winds are dying
Now no more by phantoms kissed ;
 Come, and list !

List to all the wondrous tones
Of the dying wind that moans ;
Hear the sad despairing groans
 Midst the pines.

Things that flutter ; things that mutter ;
 Quiet rest midst weird outlines
 Of the pines.

Now the dark clouds hide the light,
 Shutting out from mortal sight
 All the magic silver bright
 Of the moon ;
 Sadly blinking, elves are sinking ;
 And in shadows deep will soon
 Sleep or croon.

Now again a glorious morn
 Ushers in a day new-born ;
 Golden shafts of light adorn
 All the scene ;
 From the darkling depths come sparkling
 Rainbow-tints ; a spray-formed sheen !
 Elfland's Queen !

4. TÚONI'S GIFT

Ack, stackars fattiga moder, hvi födde du en träl,
 Som arm får gå kring världen, med sorg uti sin själ?
*Finnish folk-song.*¹

Alas ! poor wretched mother mine ;
 Why didst thou bear a thrall,
 To wander here on earth and pine
 With sorrow for his all ?

STRONG blows the wind o'er moor and fen ;
 The storm-wrack fiercely sweeps
 O'er gloomy skies ; through hill and glen
 Great Túoni's ² shadow creeps.

¹ *Finnish :*

Voi, äiti parka ja raukka !
 Kuin minun synnytit
 Maa-ilman orjaks' tänne
 Kurjuutta kärsimään.

² Túoni is the Finnish God of Death.

Through swaying pines, and howling wild
The gusts seem elfin-borne ;
And eerily each forest-child
Lists as they shriek and mourn.

The cold is piercing ; heaven is dark ;
A wandering youthful thrall
Has not returned, alas ! But hark !
'Tis his despairing call !

This wintry night, in moor and glade,
No wand'rer finds his way :
A mother for her son has prayed,
Lonely and far away.

Alas for all, whom Dark and Cold
Find undefended there !
For soon the heart, now beating bold,
Shall cease ; and Túoni's stare

With menace strange, shall give surcease
Of earthly fume and fret.
'Tis anguish now ; 'twill soon be peace ;
And paid, the last great debt.

.
Alas, poor wretched boy ; thy soul,
Great Túoni would recall ;
For gift supreme of Life, the toll
Of pain is paid. Thy call

Alone the forest deeps have heard
That sad despairing cry ;
A wraith, like to ill-omened bird,
Dark spreads o'er stormy sky.

The night-winds hear :—" Poor mother mine,
Why did't thou bear a thrall,

VOICES OF THE NORTH

To wander here on earth and pine
 With sorrow for his all? "

There lies the frozen form at rest ;
 No sadness clouds its brow ;
 Great Túoni came to give his best ;
 And all is peaceful now.

5. GRIEVE NOT

Sörj ej, Suomis flicka, fast jag är af annan kyrka ;
 Med dess mera eldig kärlek skall min själ dig dyrka.¹
*Finnish folk-song.*²

GRIEVE not, dearest Súomi's maid
 That I worship not, as thee ;
 For my heart is firmly stayed,
 And will love more ardently.

Long before the story great
 Of the worlds, in rune or rhyme,
 E'er was writ, their mighty fate
 Was man's dream, in that far time.

Countless thousand years ago
 In the human heart there came—
 With its wondrous ebb and flow—
 Thoughts from Higher Spirit's flame.

And the rarest flower of Life
 Is the dream of perfect Soul
 Of the end of Evil's strife ;
 Of some great harmonious whole.

¹ Stanza 1.

² *Finnish* :

Älä sure Suomen tyttö vaikk' on Riekkalainen.
 Riekkalaisen rakkaus' on tulen palavainen.

Of that day the Higher Flame
 Hints to every spirit sad ;
 Whispers in an awful Name
 That our hearts shall yet be glad.
 And in mother-soul, that fire
 Shews itself as tender love ;
 Which shall ever make aspire
 Human souls, that from above
 Once are touched by flame divine.
 Grieve not then, dear Súomi's maid ;
 Ne'er let Sorrow's part be thine ;
 Ever trust, be not afraid.
 Ah, my Súomi's dearest maid !
 Yes, I worship, e'en as thou ;
 Let thy heart on me be stayed ;
 With Love's jewel me endow.

6. MIDST THE SHADOWS

Ljufligt i björkens skugga jag drömde,
 bladen de skälfde för kvällens vind.
 Se lailailaa, se lailailaa.—*Finnish folk-song.*¹

Midst the birches' flickering shadows
 I am ever sweetly dreaming,
 And, caressed by evening zephyrs
 Every leaf is quivering, gleaming.

MIDST the birches' flickering shadows
 I, alone, am sweetly dreaming ;
 And, caressed by evening zephyrs,
 Every leaf is quivering, gleaming,
 Flashing bright, and gaily singing,
 In the wind, lalai la !

¹ *Finnish :*

Illalla istuin varjossa koivun,
 Koivusen lehti se väräsi,
 Se lailailaa, se lailailaa !

VOICES OF THE NORTH

And on mossy bank I ponder
Hearing subtle voices flying
Swiftly to the realms of wonder
And in faintest murmurs dying,
They are crooning, softly sighing,
Singing low, lalai la !

And I watch the shadows moving,
And the breezes in their playing ;
Every fleck and flicker proving
How the air-sprites are delaying
Or are rushing wildly, saying
To the woods, lalai la !

You are joyous in your playing
Sprites from Elfland ever coming ;
Glad, in restless stir, or staying.
And I hear your eerie humming
Midst the leaves, or strangest thrumming
On my harp, lalai la !

But alas ! the sun is setting ;
All the fleck and flicker fading ;
And the air-sprites are forgetting
All their gay and jovial raiding
Of the woodland's peace, as fading
Dies the day ; lalai la !

And the shadows now are deepening,
As the glow in heaven is dying,
And the rugged heights seem steepening,
Rising grandly, e'er defying
All poor mortals who are lying
Listening ah, lalai la !

In the shadows deeply peering
 All seems elfish, weird, uncertain ;
 And I see strange phantoms nearing,
 See them gliding through the curtain
 Of Night's mists, with forms uncertain,
 Whispering faint, lalai la !

Life is but a shadow fleeting ;
 That o'er Time's great sea is drifting ;
 Flecks of light pursue it, greeting,
 And the distant clouds seem lifting,
 But again the darkness drifting
 Closes o'er ; lalai la !

7. ROSE OF THE VALLEY

I den skyddande dalen, som lyste grön,
 sprang i ljuset en blomma skön
 Dit en landsvägens ströfvande gosse dref
 och i blomman betagen blef.—*Finnish folk-song.*¹

In the shady verdant valley
 Sought the light a lovely rose ;
 On the path a youth must dally
 And, though charmed, must pluck the rose.

LOVELY valley in seclusion
 Midst the birches and the pines !
 Is it but a fair illusion
 Or the truth, my heart divines ?

Dost thou shelter fairest angel
 Under guise of human form ;
 Come to earth on some evangel
 And to bear earth's stress and storm ?

¹ *Finnish :*

Yksi ruusu on kasvanut laaksossa,
 Joka kauniisti kukoistaa
 Yksi kulkijapoika on nähnyt sen
 Eikä voi sitä unohtaa.

VOICES OF THE NORTH

Fitting home of fairest beauty
 Roseate with the glow of youth,
 Conscious of some noble duty,
 Instinct with the highest truth !
 'Tis no wonder Youth must dally,
 Near a flower from heaven sent ;
 Quiet, restful, lovely valley,
 'Tis a rose that God hath lent.

8. BIRD OF THE FOREST

Miksi laulat, lintuseni, visertelet suolla ?
 Laulat aamiin, puolipäivin, laulat ilta puolla.
*Finnish folk-song.*¹

In the forest's shadows, hiding,
 Little bird thou'rt ever singing,
 Chirping, twittering, carolling, chiding,
 Morn and eve thy way thou'rt winging.

MORN and EVE in forest deep
 Little bird without a care
 Thou dost fly and run and leap
 With thy jovial twitter there !

Through the pine-trees' sombre forms
 Thou dost revel e'er secure,
 Sheltered from the wildest storms
 Little bird, with air demure !

Midst the birches' flickering leaves
 In the sunlight and the breeze,
 Every dryad freely gives
 Thee a welcome to her trees.

Tell me, happy little bird,
 All the secret of thy joy ;
 Why thy ways are so absurd ;
 Why does nothing thee annoy ?

¹ *Swedish :*

Lilla fågel, hvarför sjunger du i skogens gömma ?
 Arla morgon, sälla afton dina toner strömma.

Tell me, when the skies are clear,
Where the way of peace is found ;
Whisper, when they're dark and drear,
Where doth dauntless hope abound.

Tell me of the wonder-tones
In the fiercest wildest storm ;
When it sighs, and shrieks, and groans ;
While above, strange cloud-shapes form.

Tell me, when all threatens dark,
Dost thou see amidst the gloom
What assails Life's little barque ?
All the myriad things of doom ?

Dost thou know our bodies frail
Are but masks in pantomime
That they play their part and fail
On the mystic stage of Time ?

Or hast thou for Joy been sent ?
In thy world are all things glad ?
Have the shafts of envy spent
In thee ne'er their poison sad ?

Ah ! thy world is not like ours,
Acrid-bitter to its core ;
And thou spendest not the hours
Drinking in its venom-lore.

Happy bird, then carol free !
May no dark and dreary cloud
Stop thy singing : ever be
Jovial sprite, with carol loud.

9. THE RETURN

Mistäs tulet kustas tulet
 Poikani iloinen?
 Meren rannalta, meren rannalta
 Äitini kultanen.—*Finnish folk-song*.¹

Whence my son, dear, comest thou
 Thus to see thy mother now?—
 Mother, from a distant shore
 Where the waves of ocean roar
 Have I come.

FROM a distant land returning
 Where the Sun was ever burning;
 Where at noon-day, purple-glowing,
 Wave on wave of heat was flowing;
 Came an only son to greet
 Once again, 'neath northern skies,
 Where a little cottage neat
 By a brook and forest lies,
 Her he loved; his mother dear.

He has reached the land of childhood,
 Crossed its moor and fen and wildwood;
 Plunged into the forest darkling;
 Where the white snow-crystals, sparkling
 In the moonlight, icy clear;
 Seem to writhe like phantom form,
 As in Elfland wild and drear;
 Or in awe of cold and storm.
 Quiver with some ghostly fear.

Gaily on he walks and ponders;
 But alas! he strangely wanders;
 For he hears the Snow-Queen calling,
 With a voice so sweet entralling,

¹ *Swedish* :

Hvaden kommer du, hvaden kommer du,
 Käraste sonen min?
 Ifrån hafsstranden, ifrån hafsstranden
 Käraste moder min.

That all other thoughts must fly.
 And he sees her glowing eyes,
 Hears her witching voice anigh;
 And with tender, sad surprise,
 Sees her, feels her, very near.

See upon the snow he's lying,
 And the white snowflakes are flying;
 Slowly grows his body colder,
 As the winds grow fiercer, bolder.
 In the forest dark, they shriek,
 Groan and moan, and whisper strange
 To the sombre night and bleak.
 Here the weird intonings change
 When they see great Túoni near.

And a mother, sitting lonely,
 Wondering, hears a moment only
 In the wild storm's moans and sighing :—
 " Mother dear, my body's lying
 Peaceful, quiet in the snow.
 Weep not, for my soul is near.
 I have come, dost thou not know?
 Banish every sigh and tear,
 I am with thee, mother dear."

10. HER BEAUTY

Minun kultani kaunis on,
 Vaikk' on kaitaluinen
 Hei, luulia, illala !—*Finnish folk-song.*¹
 Lovely beauty has my darling.
 And a body tender, fair.
 Hey, lou-u-lia, illa-la !

¹ *Swedish* :

Ljuflig skönhet min älskling har;
 Fastän spåda lemma
 Hei, luulia, illala !

CYPRIS ! Who shall dare to paint
 In cold words thy wondrous beauty?
 If perfervid, they're too faint
 Ever to perform such duty.
 Skill of great Praxiteles,
 Were too feeble to portray thee ;
 Lesser genius than was his
 Could not other than dismay thee.
 Shall I ever dare the task,
 Of describing grace transcending?
 Such a question dare I ask
 When the work would be unending?
 Let it then suffice to hold
 That the Fates have been propitious ;
 In thy face and form and mould
 They have more than been ambitious.

II. THE KISS

Tule tänne, poikakulta,
 anna suuta mulle !
 Ei tuo äiti torune ja
 ei tuo synty olle.—*Finnish folk-song.*¹

Come, quick, my handsome lad,
 Give me a kiss ;
 Your mother would not think it bad
 To have such bliss.

WHAT subtle sprite or happy wight,
 Or phantom limp or jovial imp,
 Taught us to kiss?
 Or was it naught but happy thought,
 Some flash of light from heaven bright,
 Where all is bliss?

¹ *Swedish :*

Tryck en kyss på mina läppar !
 Vackra gosse skynda !
 Ej din moder dig lär banna,
 Ej det är att synda.

Did Adam know or Eve bestow
In Paradise, ere man was wise,
 Such bliss as this ?
Or was it just—I think it must
Have been—but chance ; a lightning glance
 Of eye, then kiss ?

Must we believe that first 'twas Eve,
Who taught that lips, in Love's eclipse,
 Must join their bliss ?
That sweet caress must ever bless ?
That Heaven lies in Love's surprise,
 A true-heart kiss ?

Ah yes, 'twas Eve, who did receive
The mandate high, when heaven was nigh,
 To bring it nigher ;
And from above, the God of Love
Sent seraph great, with soul elate
 And lips on fire,

To shew how man can better plan
To bear the stress of Life's duress,
 Through bliss divine.
Each babe knows this through mother-kiss.
And early, late, whate'er our Fate,
 This is life's wine.

Ye souls, that know the tender flow
Of feeling, tell what wonder-spell
 Is this of bliss !
Reveal the truth, eternal Youth !
Awake thy lyre, Immortal Fire !
 And sing, to this :—
 The heaven-born kiss !

12. PRETTY MAIDEN MINE

Neiti kaunis, kulta likka luovu minun puoleen
Muutoin musta tuiki murrun ikävään ja huoleen.

Finnish folk-song.¹

Pretty lassie, charming maid, wilt thou be my wife?
For my soul doth miss thee : must I grieve for life?

TELL me, pretty maiden,
Whence this power of thine?
Why hath Fortune laden
Thee with gifts divine?
Dark as hills at Aden
Are thine eyes; and fine
Are those lips, O maiden,
Red as ruby wine !

Thou hast Psyche's treasure,
Grace and perfect charm
In abundant measure.
Doth no strange alarm,
When thy heart hath leisure,
Come to warn of harm
That thou work'st, my treasure,
With thy magic charm?

Come then, Love is pleading;
Listen, dearest maid !
Be thou not unheeding,
Careless, nor afraid.
Be mine own; such ceding
Should not be delayed.
And the heart-wounds, bleeding,
Quickly staunch, dear maid.

¹ *Swedish :*

Vackra tärna, fagra flicka, vill du bli min maka?
Annars skall mitt sinne sörja och min själ dig sakna.

13. LOVE'S WANDERER

När den ljufva våren kring jorden bredt sin slöja,
 Drager jag bort till främmande land.
 Ingen vacker flicka ber att jag skall dröja
 Eller, mig räcker kärligt sin hand.¹—*Finnish folk-song.*²

WHEN joyous Spring the earth enfolds
 With veils of green ;
 Then wander I to wealds and wolds,
 Where every scene
 Is changed, and strange.
 Nor is there pretty maid to pray
 That I should stay
 Nor stretch a loving hand to say
 " Go not away ;
 The world is strange."

Sad Winter's snows and cold are past
 And Spring is King !
 And summer richness cometh fast,
 And blithe buds sing,
 And gaily play ;
 No other dearer self is there,
 Nor golden hair,
 Nor winsome eyes, nor beauty fair
 To know or care,
 By night or day.

Ye Fates that rule o'er Gods and men !
 Shall never Joy
 Be mine ? Ye gave me birth and then
 Shall ye destroy,
 Ere sings my heart

¹ Stanza 1.

² *Finnish* :

Ensimmäinen juhla kun vuoden sisään lankee,
 Silloin mä aivon matkata pois.
 Ei oo mulla kultaa joka perään suree,
 Sillä mä tahdon matkata pois.

VOICES OF THE NORTH

Because some dearest soul, in mine
 Shall seek that sign
 By which we ever must divine
 That bliss benign
 Shall be our part?

14. THE WAIF

Voi minua poika raukkaa, kuin olen turvaton,
 Ikään kuin taivaan lintu, mi lentoon luotu on.

*Finnish folk-song.*¹

Alas! A little fellow I
 With neither hearth nor home,
 And, like a bird that's born to fly,
 I o'er the world must roam.

LIKE bird am I without a care,
 Nor friends, nor hearth, nor home
 E'er call to me to rest, nor sigh
 That I should roam.

A father have I never known,
 Nor loving mother kind;
 For on the wide world I am thrown
 By Fortune blind.

So merrily I go my way;
 I eat, or starve, or play;
 And laugh at Chance's mighty sway;
 Am sad or gay.

And thus from day to day, I sing,
 As cheery as I may;
 And when great Túoni's call shall ring,
 Then ends Life's play.

¹ *Swedish:*

Ack, jag är en liten gosse förutan hem och hård,
 Som fågeln född att flyga uti den vida värld.

15. ABSENCE

Tuoll' on mun kultani, ain'yhä tuolla,
Kuninkaan kultaisen kartanon puolla;
Voi minun lintuni, voi minun kultani
Kun et tule jo, kun et tule jo !—*Finnish folk-song.*¹

Ah, my poor heart sadly straining,
Far away my darling stays,
In the royal halls remaining.
"Little birdie," this he says,
"Little heart-friend, true always."
Come then soon to me, my darling.

WHY must heart from heart be sundered

When o'er each true love holds sway?

Surely Fate has sadly blundered;

Or has Eros gone astray?

Or has Moira sternly thundered :—

"Torture all whom Love doth sway;"

While the Gods of Love have wondered.

"Why must Love be pain, always?"

16. THE SAILOR'S FAREWELL

Farväl, min kära flicka,
farväl, min mö, så tack !
Nu skall jag fjärran fara
uppå min skutas däck.—*Finnish folk-song.*²

Farewell, my dearest lassie,
Farewell, my sweetheart bright,
For far away I journey
On my vessel day and night.

FAREWELL, beloved, dearest !

The skies of heaven are bright ;

Since to my soul thou'rt nearest

My heart is happy, light.

¹ *Swedish :*

Fjärran han dröjer från grönskande dalar,
borta i konungens gyllene salar;
Ack, lilla fågelen ! Ack, lilla hjärtevän !
Kommer du ej snart, kommer du ej snart ?

² *Finnish :*

Hyvästi, kultaseni,
Hyvästi, kultani
Mun lähteä nyt täytyy
Pois kotimaaltani.

VOICES OF THE NORTH

Though parting must be sadness,
 Joy fades not as the day;
 For Soul awakes to gladness
 When Love fades not away.
 What happy mem'ries thronging
 Shall come, as o'er the wave
 My vessel flies! what longing;
 As swift return I crave!
 Alas! that souls united
 Should e'er know parting's pain;
 But, dear, our troth is plighted:
 And soon we'll meet again.
 Yes, soon will come returning
 And joy supreme be ours,
 With Life in ardour burning
 Midst perfume sweet of flowers.
 The bitterness and anguish
 Shall vanish swift, and then
 In ecstasy we'll languish,
 When, Love, we meet again.

17. SONG OF NIGHT

Med sången som min följesven jag går i fridfull kväll
 Från arbetsdagens trägna flit till hvilan i mitt tjäll.—*Finnish folk-song.*¹

With a song as my companion, dear,
 In the peaceful twilight blest,
 From the toilsome days hard labouring, here
 To my home I go to rest.

Ah, the afterglow of the day has come
 In the glorious halls of the west;
 And the cool air now is at peace, and dumb;
 For the song-birds have gone to rest.

¹ *Finnish:*

Tääll' yksinäni laulelen,
 Kun ilta tullut on;
 Nyt päivän työt jo loppuneet
 Ja pääsen lepohon.

Though my lot this day has been hard with toil,
In the sweet restoring of night
All the sense of trouble and fret and moil,
Like a thing that is gone, is light.

And the air is fresh, and my soul at peace,
And a song is within my heart ;
For I go to her, and that ache will cease
That must come, whenever we part.

But the toil of day, and each task, is light
When I think of the revoir soon ;
I shall see the joy in those eyes so bright,
And her greeting shall be my boon.

And the little repast in our humble home
Will be graced by her happy smile ;
When the flicker of light, like the eyes of gnome,
All unsteady will shine awhile.

So I trudge my way with a patient stride,
And I sing like a happy bird ;
Though the way is long, and the forest wide,
I shall soon in my home be heard.

But the clouds come swift, and the treach'rous wind
With its crystalline icy cold ;
Ah, the way grows dark, and the Night unkind ;
And the storm-fiends are fierce and bold.

And their icy spears they now fling with glee,
For the youth 'tis unequal fight ;
Ah, alas ! he falls ! He shall never see
That dear home with its joy and light.

There's a wife who waits, in the cabin cold,
 With a dread that she dare not name;
 For she thinks, alas! what the Night doth hold,
 And she knows of the Ice-fiend's fame!

In the wailing wind, she can hear a moan,
 And the tones of a sorrowful song;
 For her eyes see far, and she knows alone
 She must rest in this sad life long.

In the morning light she hath found her love
 Where he frozen and peaceful lay,
 And she thought of Túoni's world above
 At the close of Life's lonely day.

And she hears his song in the afterglow
 In the glorious halls of the west.
 'Tis in Mana's¹ world, that the blithe notes flow,
 Of the toiler who's gone to rest.

18. PAIN'S BITTER FLOOD

Voi, jos ilta joutuisi,
 Vaivat vaimentuisi
 Hikihelmet kuivisi
 Ja armas laimentuisi!
 Silloin ois, oi, silloin ois.
 Mun rinnassani rauha!²

*Finnish folk-song.*³

ALTHOUGH the day is fading
 Pain's bitter flood remains.
 Oh, that with evening's shading
 Unhappy mem'ry's stains,

¹ The Lord of the Underworld.

² Stanza 1.

³ *Swedish*:

Ack, om dagen svunne hän,
 smärtens flod fick stanna,
 kvällen tyst och vän
 och svalkade min panna!
 Då till sist jag finge ro
 Och kunde glädjas åter!

And misery and sorrow,
 Would fade away; surcease
 Come with a glad to-morrow;
 All hearts find true release.
 For here our hearts are aching,
 E'en though the skies are clear;
 But when the blue, forsaking
 The heavens, leaves earth so drear,
 Our troubled life seems saddened,
 Till death would be surcease
 From vain existence; maddened,
 The Soul cries for release.
 Oh! that the great Arcana
 Of Spirit-land were bid
 Reveal us that Nirvana
 From us for ever hid;
 That place where all the anguish
 Of souls find sweet surcease,
 And prisoned souls that languish
 Obtain a glad release.

19. SUMMER EVE

En vacker sommerafton jag gick mig i dalen hän.
 Då kom mig till mötes en flicka ung och vän.
 På kantele¹ hon spelte och sjöng med ljuflig röst
 Och lyckliga känslor uppväcktes i mitt bröst.—*Finnish folk-song.*¹

One summer evening sadly I wandered in the dell;
 And met, by Fortune's favour, a maiden young and bright;
 On Elfin-harp then playing, she sang with love's sweet might;
 Her happy voice rejoiced me; and now my heart is well.

THE gloom and frosts of winter have fled from northern
 skies;

The green and blooms of springtime were heralds of to-day;

¹ The old Finnish Harp.

² *Finnish:*

Ol' kaunis kesäilta kun laaksossa kävelin,
 Siell' kohtasin tytön, jot' aina muistelen.
 Hän kanteloa soitti ja laulun lauleli,
 Se tunteeni voitti ja heltyi syömmeni.

And now through glade and forest the subtle perfumes rise ;
And all is joy and gladness, more blithesome e'en than May.

The lichen-covered masses of rock and tree-trunk old,
The mossy bank and umbrage of fir and birch and pine,
The forest-fragrance grateful, the colours warm or cold
To me are ever tempting ; so there I shall recline.

I stroll then through the forest, to rest, and think, and
dream ;
To revel in its beauty ; enjoy its peace serene ;
The elfin forest-spirit transforms its glow and gleam
And touches with its magic like sunlight's flash, the scene.

In elfin-land then peering, as on a bank I rest,
I see its weird irradiance and glories ever bright,
With earthly things commingled, each, for the other, quest ;
The elfin queen transforms them to airy forms of light.

What shape is that I see there, with harp of Finland quaint ?
A maiden young and lovely, with fingers deft and swift,
Makes all the airy wonders awake with sigh and plaint ;
My bosom surges wildly ; she would my heart uplift.

And richer, sweeter, louder, pours forth the music then ;
Her voice, too, adds its glory, its sweetness and its pain ;
The flood of elfin music, through forest, moor, and fen,
Sweeps wildly, and returning is echoed o'er again.

And in that grand outpouring, in strange and lovely forms,
I hear all music blended, the grave, and sad, and gay ;
And all unite harmonious, the howling of the storm,
With whispering of the zephyrs at close of summer day.

The pæans of the happy, the plaintive songs and sad,
The boom of wave and thunder, the trill of bird in air,
The crooning of the mourner, the song of victory glad,
The cry of grief or joying, of ecstasy, despair,

All magic of the present, and mystery of the past,
 The meaning of the future, all seemed as one great whole.
 Oh ! Elfland be my country, till great Túoni cast
 The die for my demission, and Soul shall meet with Soul.

But vanished now is Elfland, its music and its song,
 The evening air is colder and stars are glitt'ring bright ;
 But in my heart that mem'ry shall last my whole life long,
 The maid and Elfland's beauty, on that sweet summer night.

20. FROM EARTH TO SKY

Ifrån den mörka jordens grus
 mitt öga blickar sällt
 mot alla vackra stjärnors ljus,
 på himlens blåa fällt.—*Finnish folk-song.*¹

I, wistful, from the sombre earth
 Must look toward azure sky,
 For Heaven's gems of priceless worth
 Are glittering there, on high.

THE wind among the birches plays ;
 Its whispers rise or fall ;
 And midst the pine-trees' gloomy ways
 It moans, midst phantoms tall.

Like thing of life it grasps each bough ;
 The phantoms change their form ;
 And wilder tones I hear, as now
 It sweeps like gust of storm.

Through copse and glade, and forest grim,
 O'er moor and fen, it hies ;
 It shrieks and groans, as through those dim
 And elfland forms it flies.

¹ *Finnish :*

Ah, mikä taitaa olla mun kauniimpi katsella,
 Kuin tähdet ja tuo kirkas kuu, ylhäällä taivaalla.

VOICES OF THE NORTH

And sickly faint, in hovel poor,
 A light is scarce revealed;
 In that wild shelter, on the moor,
 The flickering flames but yield

A strange mysterious sense of gloom
 To Night so cold and bleak;
 And darkest Túoni's shade of doom
 A victim seems to see.

.

A wasted form on pallet bare
 Was spent, and racked with pain.
 It now lies very still; and Care
 Shall touch it ne'er again.

Nor shall Life's glow illumine that face;
 No more shall gleam those eyes;
 For ended is an earthly race
 In everlasting skies.

.

My hope no more is here below;
 To look on that wan shape,
 I dare not! Oh that I might go
 To her, my pain escape!

.

The glittering stars in heaven on high,
 Send deepest sense of peace.
 Ah, God of Death, though thou art high
 I know of pain's surcease!

For in those streams of heavenly light
 New strength comes to my soul:
 And from God's jewels, glowing bright,
 Is that, shall make me whole.

21. LITTLE GUEST FROM HEAVEN

Glädjen har sjungit sin sång i mitt hjärta,
 Ljufligt det klappat af moders fröjd;
 O, du min lilla, min fröjd och min smärta,
 Ljufvaste gäst ifrån himmelshöjd ! ¹—*Finnish folk-song.* ²

IN my heart Joy's song has come,
 Darling, thou my bliss, my pain;
 Ah, my lips, with gladness dumb,
 Fain would speak, and yet how vain
 'Twere to tell of that delight
 Which has come from heaven's height.

Oh what ecstasy is mine !
 Like a surging flood it swells.
 When those little eyes of thine
 Look upon me ; and there dwells
 Through my inmost being now,
 Joy my lips can ne'er avow.

Little darling from above
 May this joy be ever thine.
 Sweetest token thou, of Love !
 Richest gift, that e'er was mine !
 Thou art, darling, in my sight
 Brightest gift from heaven's height.

¹ Stanza 1.

² *Finnish* :

Riemuinen rintani kauneasti kaikui
 Päättävän ei luulunna laulujaan
 Tuli mulle poikanen toisilta mailta,
 Syntyipä poikanen mailmaan.

22. THE PAIN OF ABSENCE

Ack, ack min hjärtevän har så långt att vandra !
Första versten är det sjö och ödslig hed den andra.

*Finnish folk-song.*¹

Alas the dear one, now from me
To travel far is beckoned ;
The first verst is the wide, wide sea ;
An empty void the second.

O FATE ! Dost thou call him from me
On mission grim and hard ?
And must he cross the wide, wide sea,
And must our lives be marred
By thy determination ?

Why didst thou then our lives entwine
And let each taste of bliss ?
And why exchange his soul and mine
By magic of a kiss—
Love's transubstantiation ?

Oh Fate ! What dark-laid schemes hadst thou
In driving thus away
My Life and Light and Joy ? I bow
Not meekly to thy sway,
And cruel, heartless sending.

A void is all my being now,
Till he, my lover, come ;
Till o'er the sea his vessel's prow
Is turned, must joy be dumb ;
But 'twill not be unending.

For though the desert waste is wide
And wild the stormy sea,
For aye Love shall not be denied,
Tormented ever be,
By cruel separation.

¹ *Finnish :*

Voi, voi, kuin kullallein on niin pitkä matka,
kappale on kangasta. Ja virstan verta vettä.

And when he comes, the skies again
 Will glow, new-gladdened, bright,
 And Life be richer, fuller, then,
 Our Eros home be light
 With Love's irradiation.

23. THE FOREST HOME

Dold mellan furorna ligger min koja,
 djupt i den finska skogens ljufva sus.
 Högt öfver topparna resa sig bergen,
 blånande skönt uti morgonens ljus.
 Hoi, laari laari laa ! Hoi, laari laari laa !
 Susa ditt svar du min finska skog !

Finnish folk-song.

'Midst the mossy banks and woodland
 Is my home, so charming, bright ;
 O'er the fir-trees sombre tinting
 Rises bold the mountain height.
 And its pinnacles are glinting
 Blue, in haze of morning light.
 Ah, holla, holla, holla, ho !
 Echo answers, whispering light,
 In my forest rich delight.

IN the sombre pine-trees hidden
 Lies my blithesome forest home,
 Where the restless winds unbidden
 Howl or shriek, or whisp'ring roam.
 And above are mountains airy,
 Ever blue in morning light ;
 Home of kobold, elf, and fairy,
 And of snow-field, sparkling, bright.
 All the air is cool and fragrant,
 And the lichens on the trees
 With a subtle perfume vagrant,
 Dower each zephyr, wind, and breeze.

¹ *Finnish :*

Honkaen keskellä mökkini seisoo,
 Suomeni soreassa salossa,
 Honkaen väliltä siin tävä selkä,
 Vilkuvi koitehen valossa.
 Hoi, laari laari laa ! Hoi laari laari la !
 Kaikuu mun suloinen Suomeni maa !

Here I list to subtle voices
 In the calm and in the storm ;
 Every sound my heart rejoices,
 Every colour, every form.

Magic, too, of woodland quiet,
 With its shadows cool and soft ;
 Where but fantasy runs riot,
 And my soul is borne aloft.

Come, then, dear one, share my joying,
 Midst the forest birch and pine,
 Where, with Love for ever buoying
 Heart to heart shall e'er incline.

24. SUMMER NIGHT IN THE FOREST

Jag gick mig en sommarnatt uti lunden,
 Där så ofta jag bidat morgonstunden,
 Där små fåglarna drilla,
 Skogen är så tyst och stilla
 Och mitt hjärta finner ro från världenes villa.¹

*Finnish folk-song.*²

ONE summer night I wandered far
 In forest glades,
 Where oft I'd seen the morning star
 From its deep shades ;
 No sound was there but merry trill
 Of blithesome bird ;
 And all was restful, happy, still :
 No bleak wind stirred.

¹ Stanza 1.

² *Finnish* :

Läksin minä kesäyönä käymään,
 Siihen laaksoon, kussa kuuntelin päivää,
 Kussa lintuset laulaa,
 Metsäkanatkin ne pauhaa,
 Ja mun sydämeni etsii lepoa ja rauhaa.

My heart found peace, and I surcease
From Earth's confusion,

And midst the fir-trees, solemn, dark,
I caught a glimpse
Of flick'ring shapes, a moment dark,
And then like imps
In reckless, wild, fantastic play
And elfin-dance;
The while a ghostly roundelay
I heard advance
The phantom dance. Each form and glance
Was sweet illusion !

O land of phantom forms, I love
Thy happy realm !
Its glowing brightness, from above,
Shall guide my helm.
As o'er the stormy seas of life
I sail my bark;
And thus its squalor, base-born strife,
Leave no sad mark,
Nor thoughts that mar, nor livid scar
Through Hell's intrusion.

O land of fantasy and joy !
Thy roseate glow
Makes us forget that base alloy,
That seems to flow
O'er all things earthly, like a stream
Of noxious fire,
With noisome odour, cruel gleam,
And venom dire;
With blasting flame of all good fame,
And joy's exclusion.

25. PSYCHE'S POWER

Minun kultani kaunis on,
 Sen suu kuin auran kukka
 Siniset silmät sillä on,
 Ja kultanen sen tukka.—*Finnish folk-song.*¹

Lovely is my treasure fair
 And her eyes are blue;
 Glorious is her golden hair,
 Red as berries are her lips
 And her soul is true.

PSYCHE ! With thy lovely brow,
 And thine innocence of eyes,
 And thy tender crimson lips;
 Tell me, tell me, why didst thou
 Come from realms beyond the skies?
 Why didst thou in human guise
 Leave the joys of paradise?
 For to soul in Love's eclipse
 All is night !

Psyche ! How like lily fair
 Is thy bosom ; and each cheek
 Glows with bloom of rarest peach.
 What a wealth of golden hair !
 Tell me, Psyche, angel meek,
 Where may I thy model seek ?
 Was it but in Soul of Greek ?
 Is it now beyond the reach
 Of our sight ?

Fairest Psyche ! Yes, 'tis true
 Thou art angel gentle, though
 None can boast such power ! And we
 When thine eyes of violet's hue

¹ *Swedish :*

Vacker är min hjärtans kär
 och blåa ögon har hon,
 munnen är liksom ett bär
 och gyllne lockar har hon.

All their love-effulgence shew
 Must their power admit, and know
 That the love-light's pulse and flow
 Bend us to thy will; we see
 Thy great might.

Yes; thy power is all complete
 Psyche! Heart's eternal queen!
 Who shall fail to worship thee,
 Gentle goddess, when we meet
 Thee incarnate? When thou'rt seen
 With thy glorious radiant mien,
 Shining forth, majestic queen,
 All must willing bend the knee
 In delight!

26. THE DIRGE OF THE WAVE

Uppå stranden jag ensam sitter,
 Gnolar sakta på visan min.
 Tiden görs mig så lång och bitter,
 Vind och vågor hat slumrat in.
Finnish folk-song.¹

Here on the shore I am sitting lonely,
 Softly and sadly I sing my lay;
 Weary my days; they are bitter only;
 The wind and the waves, they but sleep and play.

By the blue sea's shore I sit and ponder,
 While the restless waves incessant play;
 O'er the sad grey skies the white wings wander,
 As the birds fly on their lonely way.

In the splash of wave, as each is breaking,
 With its rhythmic cadence on the shore,

¹ *Finnish:*

Yksin istun ja lauleskelen,
 Aikan' on niin ikävä;
 Vesi seisoo ja linut laulaa,
 Eikä tuulikaan vedätä.

There are tones of music ever waking,
And I hear them 'neath the angry roar.

And in memory come sad thoughts, strange thronging,
Of the bright blue eyes no more on earth;
Of the light that filled my soul with longing,
And that gave my life a priceless worth.

Ah, 'tis Pain that yields to Song its beauty;
There are sweet, sad sounds in birch and pine,
Ah, dread Túoni, was it thy duty
To assail that life, so much for mine?

Ah, I hear, within, my soul's intoning,
As the child will hear the conch's song,
With its weird-like sounds of waters moaning
And the boom of waves, that break along

On the golden sands or rocks resistant,
With their foam and spume and troubled forms;
As I list, I know the soul subsistent
In the great wide world, is racked by storms.

But the heaving waves e'er yielding, yielding,
Can inshape themselves to every shore;
But my heart, alas! knows no such shielding,
And is filled with but its bitter lore.

For my light of life, dread Túoni taking
Has left my heart forever wounded sore;
And the plash of wave, a dirge is making,
With its hopeless boom for evermore.

27. MY ABSENT DARLING

Käraste gök som gal uti fjärran borta vid Saimens andra strand
fins ingen julle där, som kan föra min älskade hit i land?

*Finnish folk-song.*¹

Far away, my darling, singing,
Dwells on fair Saimen's shore;
Will no sail, like white bird winging
Bear him back, though billows roar?

AH, my heart is lonely pining,
For a darling far away!
Though the sun is warmly shining
Cold and dull seems brightest day.

In that land my dear one, singing,
Trills his merry, jovial lay,
And his voice's joyous ringing
Is as blithe as month of May.

Ah, all song but echoes sadly,
When my laddie's far away;
And I long to go, how madly,
Where my heart, too, could be gay!

How my thoughts are ever flying
There, to Saimen's happy shore!
Here I ever, longing, sighing,
Miss him daily, evermore.

White sails, flying o'er the billows
As they plunge, and hiss, and roar,
Blue as sapphires, green as willows,
Bring him back from Saimen's shore.

Bring my darling; bear him singing
Safe to me from that far strand;
Let me hear once more the ringing
Of his voice, in this dear land

¹ *Finnish:*

Minun kultani kaukana kukkuu,
aina Saimaan rannalla;
Ei ole ruuhia rannalla,
joka minun kultani kannattaa.

VOICES OF THE NORTH

Then shall joy be mine abounding,
 And the bitter-sweet, and pain,
 When his lips to mine are rounding,
 As we greet and kiss again.

28. THE LAPLANDER'S SONG

Det finnes ej under himlens fäste
 blomma så fager som kärestan min.
 Hon skall bli mitt väna vif,
 Skänke glädje åt mitt lif!

*Finnish folk-song.*¹

Beneath the dome of heaven above
 No flower is fair as my dear love.
 She shall be my pretty wife,
 Giving joy throughout my life!

WAS there e'er more radiant glow
 Than illumes my Rose's face?
 Lovelier hair?
 Sympathy her voice doth know;
 Ah, what wealth of charm and grace
 She has there!

Forest-flower of colour rare
 That in Lapland's wilds are found
 Thou art sweet;
 Yet canst thou with her compare
 In her golden glory crowned
 As is meet?

For such tresses rich, of gold
 Ample, flowing, wavy, bright,
 Are her dower.
 And their splendour, fold on fold,
 Shining in the summer light,
 Tells her power.

Finnish:

Ei taivaan alla ja avaralla
 Löydy niin kaunista kukkasta
 Kuin mun oma kultani,
 Joll' on minun sydämeni.

What am I that I should dream
 E'er to keep my heart's desire ?
 Or divine
 Why her eyes with love-light gleam,
 When they flash the sacred fire
 Into mine ?

Here 'tis sombre, cheerless, bleak,
 And the skies are grey and sad,
 Joyless, cold ;
 But the glow upon her cheek,
 And her sweet smile, make me glad,
 Fearless, bold.

Yes, whene'er my Rose is near
 All things seem transfixed with light,
 Clad with joy ;
 Sunny smile or furtive tear,
 Home or forest, every sight
 Streams with joy.

29. CHILDHOOD'S FRIENDSHIP

Sä kasvoit, neito kaunoinen
 Isäsi majassa,
 Kuin kukka kaunis, suloinen
 Vihreellä nurmella.—*Finnish folk-song.*¹

As the daylight clearer grows
 So thy soul grows pure and white.
 In the meadow, never rose
 Beauty shewed, more radiant bright.

DEAREST, as thy body grows,
 So thy soul grows purer white ;
 Thou art lovely as the rose
 Midst the flowers of meadow bright.

¹ *Swedish :*

Du växte upp så vit och skär
 och ren som dagens glans.
 Så skön en ros ej ängen bär
 uti sin blomster krans.

And its perfect mould and grace
 Matchless form and colour fair,
 Are reflected in thy face,
 Glowing 'neath thy golden hair.

Ah my heart-friend, how thine eyes
 Sweet and tender thoughts express !
 How they glow with glad surprise !
 How they tell your heart-caress !

Shall our lives for ever twine,
 And for me be thy caress ?
 Shall I one day call thee mine
 Know how fully thou canst bless ?

30. REMINISCENCE

Se, mellan skyar himlen är blå och full af stjärnor klara !
 Så är mitt sinne och fylldt af tankar, som komma och som jara.

Finnish folk-song ¹

See midst Heaven's dark sapphire deep,
 How the stars now twinkle, peep :
 How their light doth ebb and flow !
 Thus in memory and mind
 Like the stars, thoughts come and go.

Do you remember, dearest,
 That night beneath the stars ;
 When heart to heart was nearest ;
 When naught was there that mars ;

When glow of all existence
 Seemed living in our veins ;
 When dear Love's mad insistence
 Threw to the winds the reins

That guide our poor, frail beings
 O'er Life's strange roads and ways ?

¹ *Finnish :*

Taivas on sininen ja valkoinen ja tähtösiä täynä,
 Niin on mun nuori sydämeni ajatuksia täynä.—

Do you remember seeing
With wonder and amaze

That then alone came, living,
The flame of wondrous love,
With ecstasy, and giving
To know the joys above?

Do you remember, dearest,
How shone the sapphire seas,
When soul to soul was nearest?
How, with the evening breeze,

Came perfume sweet of flowers,
To us, dear, from the land,
As 'twere from Psyche's bowers
In Eros' magic strand?

Do you remember, dearest,
How, shining bright and clear,
That night, to high heaven nearest,
We knew its glory, dear?

We knew what seraphs glowing
Must think and know and feel,
What life-tides glorious flowing
Mean, when a love is real;

How burst the chains asunder
That prison human souls
When Love, in power and wonder,
His mystery unrolls:

.

Yes dear; there's no forgetting
For those who once have known,
And at the last sun-setting
We'll know the glories flown—

Again to us returning—
 Are endless, in that strand
 Where, in a radiance burning,
 We dwell in Eros' land.

31. THE CHILD OF THE BILLOWS

Merellä olen minä syntynyt,
 Ja laivalla olen minä luotu,
 Tän on pojan ristiäiset
 Laivan kannella juotu.—*Finnish folk-song.*¹

Of the sea was I born
 And a ship was my cot,
 When the sailors baptised me
 A fête was my lot.

I WAS born where rolling billow,
 Lashed to fury by the wind,
 Tossed the barque that was my pillow;
 Where a storm-fiend on each billow
 Rode and revelled, mad and blind.

When the tempest fierce was howling,
 Midst its wildest roar and hiss,
 In the groaning and the growling
 Of the mighty wave, and howling,
 Knew I first my mother's kiss.

Through the shrouds and ratlines playing
 Like a weird æolian harp,
 Swept the gale; in tones betraying
 How the storm-fiends love their playing,
 Love their shrieking shrill and sharp.

¹ *Swedish:*

Ute på blåa hafvet är jag född,
 och skeppet blef vaggan åt den lille.
 Döpt jag vardt af muntra sjömän
 uppa däck vid ett gille.

So I revel in the gloaming
 When the storm-wrack looks so grave ;
 And I love the waters foaming
 O'er the black depths, in the gloaming ;
 And the mighty, restless wave.

And I know the stormy ocean,
 With the thunder of its wave,
 With its wild insurgent motion,
 Cruel foam-flecked heaving ocean,
 Shall, ah ! some day, be my grave.

32. ON DVINA'S SHORES

Vienan rannall' koivun alta
 Kuulin laulun kaunihin, -
 Aurinkoisen taivahalta
 Vaipuess aaltoihin.—*Finnish folk-song*.¹

In the heavens the sun is setting
 As I sit by Dvina's shore
 Near the birches, all forgetting
 Save the songs that seem to pour
 From the Dvina's other shore.

O'ER the white-stemmed birches shining,
 Lo, the Sun sinks swift to rest !
 Rainbow colours, clouds outlining,
 Now adorn the glorious west.

In the rhythmic splash of waters,
 On the Dvina's peaceful shore,
 Sounds an echo, of her daughters,
 Versed in Elfland-music's lore.

List, the tones are growing stronger
 Echoes swell, no longer faint,

¹ *Swedish* :

När den varma solen släcktes
 vid den fjärran skogens rand,
 nedjens alla genljud väcktes
 af en sång från Dvinas strand.

VOICES OF THE NORTH

And each music-burst is longer,
Sounding like a Naiad's plaint.

Now a peal of siren-singing
From some phantom-world of song
Floods the trembling air, with ringing
Bell-like tones, that echo long.

Ah, the sounds are fainter growing,
Rising, falling, weirdly sad;
And the clouds have ceased their glowing;
And no more are gay and glad.

O'er the peaceful, plashing waters
Comes no longer elfin sound
For the Elfland's merry daughters
Sleep, as Nightfall closes round.

33. UNREQUITED LOVE

Ej någonsin kan jag dig glömma,
fast din kärlek aldrig jag får!
Din bild jag troget vill gömma
i mitt hjärta, hvart jag går
Men kunde dig jag smycka
med guld, och skänka dig ett slott,
då skulle kärleks lycka
nog falla äfven på min lott.¹

*Finnish folk-song.*²

THOUGH thy love I have not, yet
Ne'er can I thy soul forget;
Graven is thy form and face
On my heart. Naught shall efface

¹ Stanzas 1 and 2.

² *Finnish* :

En voi sua unhottaa pojjes
Vaikk' en ikänään sua saa,
Sä syämessäni olet
Ikuisessa muistossa.
Jos arvossa mä oisin
Ja rikkahitten rinnalla
Niin totta varmaan vois
Viel' onnenikin kukoista.

Aught of these, where'er I go,
From my mem'ry's ebb and flow.

Ah, that I could thee endow
With some fairy castle now ;
Thee with gold and gems adorn
On this radiant summer morn !
For to render aught to thee
Were a joy, eternally.

Yes : my heart is thine, my queen,
Fair of form, with eyes serene,
Though into their depths I peer
Earnestly, as would a seer,
In the violet deeps I find
Naught but placid friendship kind.

How the tumult of my heart
Makes me long for richer part,
Deeper share of thy dear life !
Sharp is wound of cruel knife,
Yet it wounds not deep as this,
That as yet I find not bliss.

In the singing of my heart
All my passion and my zest
On the tides of life so flow
That thy soul should feel and know
How I cherish thee, my queen,
Love thy face and form and mien.

Let those quiet violet eyes
Shew me truly Love's surprise ;
Let their deeps but shew the light
That betrays Love's wondrous might ;
Yield me, dearest, with a kiss,
Loving hearts' ecstatic bliss.

Truly I could thee endow
 With Love's palace even now;
 Give thee, on this happy morn
 Rich as light of day, new-born,
 All the wealth I now possess
 Heart that loves and longs to bless.

34. MISERERE

Kuules mun kulta eukkoni,
 Kuule nyt rukoukseni :
 Huojenna sa huoleni
 Ja huokaukseni.—*Finnish folk-song*.¹

Listen, I entreat thee
 Mother dear, mine own;
 From mine anguish free me,
 Lest I weep and groan.

MOTHER dear, mine own !
 Life hath lost its gladness ;
 Grey is every tone ;
 Nor can I its sadness
 Bear alone.

Dearest mother mine,
 In my heart is anguish ;
 Clasp my hand in thine ;
 For my soul doth languish
 And decline.

Mother, ever dear,
 Sweetest words were spoken ;
 Now I live in fear,
 Soul and body broken,
 Mother dear !

¹ *Swedish* :

Hör mina suckar, lilla mor !
 Smärta jag lider, grym och stor.
 Lindra kvalet, som jag bär,
 ack hör mig, moder kär !

Mother, how thy hand
 Mine is sweetly holding ;
 In deep need I stand
 Of thy love's enfolding,
 Guiding hand.

Mother, all mine own,
 Let me comfort borrow,
 Lest I cry and groan ;
 Thou dost know my sorrow,
 Thou alone.

“ Mother, darling mine ” :—
 'Twas but faintest groaning ;
 Scarce of life the sign ;
 Only whispered moaning :—
 “ Darling mine.

“ Mother, there on high
 Glowing stars are shining.”
 'Twas a whispered sigh ;
 End of pain and pining
 In the sky.

35. THE LITTLE WANDERER

Lilla fågel, kommer du till sist ! Dagen redan har farit.
 Efter dig jag länge spanat. Säg mig, hvar du varit.

*Finnish folk-song.*¹

Little bird, thou'rt come at last !
 Day, already long, has passed,
 Long for thee I've looked and cried,
 Tell me, dear, where thou did'st hide.

OVER moor and fen and fell,
 Through the glade and in the dell,
 Wand'ring, led by Elfland's spell,
 Came a child.

¹ *Finnish :*

Hyvää iltaa, minun lintusein, terve tuloas tänne !
 Missä viivyit tuleessasi, miks' et joutunut ennen ?

In the eve, the fading light
Told the careless little wight
That he was by Elfin might
Now beguiled.

Homeward then he quickly sped,
By some kindly fairy led;
Tears of joy his mother shed,
As she smiled;

And the happy little wight
With his merry face, and bright,
Told his mother of his flight
O'er the wild.

Tell me, is each little child
Guided by some angel mild?
Is he over moor and wild
Safe beguiled?

Every kobold, nymph, and sprite,
Sombre gnome and fairy light,
Undine, dryad, naiad bright
Loves a child!

36. WHERE THE HEDGE AND RIVER MEET

Tätt invid floden står en hägg, där i sorg jag har bojt min panna.
Bort ifrån mig min älskade farit och ensam jag här fått, stanna.

*Finnish folk-song.*¹

Where the hedge and river meet,
There my head is bent with sorrow.
For no longer shall I greet
Him I love, until that morrow
When we there shall meet again;
Lonely thus must I remain.

At the swift Vuoksi's edge
Where the shelter of the hedge
Hides a little grassy ledge
Was our tryst;

¹ *Finnish:*

Tuomi on virran reunalla, jonka juurella minä itkin,
Vieraille maille kultani läksi ja jätti mun tänne yksin.

There we met each summer night,
When the heavens were ever bright ;
And with joy our hearts were light,
As we kissed.

By the river now I stray,
And its thunder seems to say—
“ Ah, thy love is far away
Little maid ! ”
But he'll come again, I know,
And the tender words shall flow,
While the summer warmth shall glow
In the glade.

Ah, no more for him I'll fear,
For my love will soon be near,
Then no longer sigh and tear
Must be mine ;
When the lonely days have flown,
When I hear his voice alone,
When the music of its tone
Shall incline

All my soul to him with power,
Making life in that sweet hour
Perfect as in Eden's bower,
Radiant, light ;
While the splash of waters gay
Shall with elfin-playing say—
“ Seize the moment, while you may
Happy, bright ! ”

And the distant coo of dove,
Shall be echo of our love,
And with arch of heaven above
O'er us rolled ;

Psyche shall her Eros greet,
Where the hedge and river meet;
And the Night with perfume sweet
Shall enfold.

37. THE ROSE

Blyg en ros ur grönskans sköte
mot ljuset vägen fann.
Hon nickar mig till möte,
men jag blott gråta kan.—*Finnish folk-song.*¹

One day in the meadow meeting
Just a modest little rose,
That had found its way to light,
I saw it, in friendly greeting,
Nodding to me, glancing bright.
It was happy, free from woes.
I must weep, O little rose.

LITTLE flower, so pure and fragrant,
Seeking ever heaven's light;
Why dost thou, to this poor vagrant,
Nod so happy, friendly, bright?

Thou art fair; unstained thy beauty;
And thy lovely perfect form
Knows no other need for duty,
Than to bow before the storm.

I, alas, a wand'rer saddened,
Am not fit for such as thee,
For, by mammon-poison maddened,
I shall never more be free.

When Apollo shines, thy dower
To the air, is perfume sweet;
And in lover's shady bower
Thou art there, true love to greet.

¹ *Finnish:*

Ruusu kasvaa kunahalla ja kainost i kimmeltää,
Vaun ruusua kun katson Niin kyynel' silmään jää.

Perfect flower, thy sweet informing
Is of innocence and love ;
And the stressed soul's cloud, and storming,
Thou shalt ever be above.

For we, dust-born, grovel ever,
In the things of little worth ;
And the heavenly ties we sever ;
Chain our spirit from its birth.

Thou alone art free and fragrant ;
Flower-queen, perfected thrice !
Thou, too, must on earth be vagrant ;
And must be of Paradise !

BOOK I

NOTES

Note 1. In the original the stanzas selected by Runeberg as the key-notes or dominant ideas of the five cantos are as follows :—

Canto I. Stanza 36, page 6.

Han, skaparn af lycka och sed,
skall se en dag, när, fläckad af brott, hans ätt
slocknar i blygd, hans son, den ende,
sluter som brud sin syster i eldad famn.

Canto II. Stanza 11, page 11.

Hvems skall flickan af Shelma blifva,
hvem skall plocka dig, lundarnas ros?
Fläkt kring strömmarnas stränder,
hvem skall andas din svalkas doft?

Canto III. Stanzas 24 and 25, pages 22, 23.

O, ej till fläkt jag föddes och ej till våg,
fast ej min tjusning tändes som andras.
En flickas varma, bäfvande hjerta slår
här under min snö af längtan också.

Canto IV. Stanzas 39 and 40, page 35.

Hvi dröjer han, Fjalars son?
Har Innishonna i lundars natt
hans stridshog lockat till hvila,
förgäter Hjalmar sitt ord?

Canto V. Stanzas 79 and 80, page 54.

Hvad är menskan, att mot er hon stormar!
Sternor like, i onådd rymd
len I genom molnen af jordens öden,
dem i lek en fläkt af er vilja styr.

They may be literally translated as hereunder :—

Canto I. Stanza 36, page 6.

He, creator of bliss and custom,
Shall see a day, when stained by crime, his race
Shall go out in shame, his only son
Embracing as bride his sister in fervid embrace.

Canto II. Stanza 11, page 11.

Who shall the maid of Shelma win?
Who shall pluck thee, rose of the grove?
(Thou) Zephyr about the river's shores,
Who shall breathe thy cool fragrance?

Canto III. Stanzas 24 and 25, pages 22, 23.

Oh, not for zephyr was I born, and not for wave,
Although my passion is not fired as others.
A maid's warm trembling heart beats
Here under my snow of longing nevertheless.

Canto IV. Stanzas 39 and 40, page 35.

Why tarries he, Fjalar's son?
Has Innishonna in the groves of Night
His warrior spirit lulled to rest?
Forgets Hjalmar (now) his word?

Canto V. Stanzas 79 and 80, page 54.

Oh, what is man that he should storm against you!
Like stars, in Space's void,
You smile through the clouds of earth's destiny
And check in sport by a (mere) breath of your will.

It may be mentioned that neither the original, nor the rendering in English by Anna Bohnhof in 1904, is severely uniform in metre, nor is either rhymed. Her rendering, printed in Helsingfors by Lilius & Hertzberg, Ltd., and published there by the Helios Company, Ltd., is preceded by a sketch of Runeberg's life written by Bernhard Estlander: this may be found of interest.

Note 2. "Olaf" has been preferred to "Alf," the original word, for obvious reasons.

Note 3. "Smygande bjarmer" are the words used by Runeberg in stanza 18.

Note 4. In the poem "der Finjal tronat," *i. e.*, "where Fingal was enthroned." This "Finjal" is the Fingal of Macpherson's "Ossian." All other names are simply reproduced from the Swedish, excepting Frey, which has been rendered by Freya.

Note 5. "Det var Frey, som klädde i grönska tegen, blott Allfader hägnade landets frid," *i. e.* "It was Freya who clothed with green the fields, Alone the All-Father secures peace to the land."

Note 6. As the one-stanza folk-songs are given in Finnish itself, as well as in Swedish, some remarks about the language of Finland (Suomi) will not be out of place. Suomi and Magyar are the two great branches of the Ugro-Finnish languages. Suomi is a supple and very harmonious language, extraordinarily rich, as will be observed, in vowels and diphthongs, and in the latter each vowel is distinctly heard. Its accent falls always on the first syllable of a word: and a double vowel forms a long syllable. The following indications will give some idea of its vocal character. Each of its doubled consonants is distinctly sounded; its aspirate, "h," is strongly breathed; its vowels and diphthongs are pronounced somewhat as in German, except "ei," which is approximately the "é" of French; and "ou," which is nearly like "au" in German, or slightly like "ow" in English. The "u" is like the English "oo." Its "j" is like the German.

Note 7. Túoni is the "God of Death" of the Suomelaisset (*i. e.* the Fen-men or Finns), Túonela being the home or kingdom of Túoni. Mána is the Lord of the Underworld, which is known as Mánala.



BOOK II

ECHOES OF HELLAS

BOOK II

DEDICATION

O Soul of Woman! through thy fairer form expressed—
Adorned by subtler, gentler graces than possessed
By Form of Man, whose rugged sterner self is shewn
In his tumultuous life—thou art not fully known
Except to him, who, in mysterious deeps unseen
Of his own soul, beholds the ever-wondrous Queen
He must adore—great Psyche's self, irradiant, pure.
The story Apuleius told, I would immure
In our great English tongue, as Linke's vivid thought
Had shaped it in his own. The urgent task was fraught
With joy. And now to thee I dedicate these songs
That tell of Psyche's glory, pain and cruel wrongs.
To thee, too, Soul of Woman! I would humbly bring
As tribute also, Songs of Nature, and would sing
The eerie songs of Nature's greatest mystery, Death.
For thou art with us from our first to latest breath;
We learn of Love's great passion in a mother's kiss,
And know his rapture in caress supreme of bliss:
It is through Love that nature shews her wonders best;
And who shall close our eyes when comes the final rest,
And breathe the dear consoling words of sympathy?
O soul of Woman! thou art very fair to see;
And 'tis to thee, I now would dedicate my lays,
To thee I now would sing, O Fair! my hymns of praise

BOOK II

PREFACE

Echoes of Hellas consists of three parts, viz. I, a translation of Ernst Oskar Linke's *Eros and Psyche*, published in 1884; II, *Songs of Nature*; and III, *Songs of Death*. It might appear that in strictness only Part I should be attributed to Greece, since the story, though modified by the personality and insight of Linke, is really founded upon the original of Apuleius and contains its fundamental elements.

In essence, however, Linke's *Eros* and his *Psyche* have many Indo-Germanic elements. *Psyche* finds the satisfaction of her being in the annihilation of all Ego-separateness. It is when the lesser Gods, incapable of seeing the highest truth, believe that *Eros* alone endures, *Psyche* indeed having vanished, that the child Joy is born. This voices the conception that the woman-soul seeks its counterpart in the soul of man, and Joy comes only in that rapturous union that can never be realised completely in a world limited by the opposition of Matter and Spirit.

Though this first part is essentially a translation, ordinarily following very closely the original of Linke, I have not hesitated in a few instances to vary slightly his figures and language. The temple of *Eros* on the island was a rose-bower, over which was a nest for slumber. Without eliminating the Arcadian simplicity, I have preferred to describe the columns of the temple as rose-sculptured, and have not made the place of slumber a nest above the temple itself.

The language of Linke is oftentimes of exquisite beauty and fervour, and the word-building power of the German tongue is seen occasionally to confer very great advantages. "Wundermelodieenströme" which constitutes a single line

in Linke's poem, though literally translated by, for example, "Wondrous streams of melody," loses its beauty of form in translation.

Part II, *Songs of Nature* are also Echoes of Hellas in the sense that the fusion of the intellectual and sensuous elements is characteristically Hellenic, and, though the subject in some instances is modern and in others ancient, it is believed that each song reflects in some measure the Grecian mental attitude.

The Songs of Death, Part III, are intended to exhibit the contrast between the attitude of Nature and that of our Souls towards Death. The higher intuition of man would voice itself as in "Sleep and Death," and as in "Mors Benigna," but Nature sings the "Mors Irrisor," a contrast which has been beautifully expressed in another way in the "Tod und Schlaf," of Krummacher.

The Greek mind, with its philosophic tincture, saw into the heart of the world's problems with their sphinx-like mystery, and it could express exquisitely the truth crudely masked by the External. It is for the reader to say how far the spirit of the volume is Hellenic, modified by that more profound insight into the hopelessness of unalloyed Hedonism which characterises philosophy to-day, and transformed by that enlarged conception of Time and Space which constitutes one of the most splendid heritages of modern thought.

GEORGE HANDLEY KNIBBS.

Australia, January, 1913.

BOOK II

CONTENTS

I

EROS AND PSYCHE

(Translated from the German of Ernst Oskar Linke)

PART I

CHAP.		PAGE
I	THE CURSE OF BEAUTY	131
II	THE ISLE OF EROS	142
III	PSYCHE'S SISTERS	154
IV	TEMPTATION	163
V	PSYCHE'S LAMP	172

PART II

VI	PSYCHE'S PILGRIMAGE	188
VII	IN THE DEPTHS	198
VIII	IN THE HEIGHTS	207

PART III

IX	PSYCHE'S FLIGHT TO HEAVEN	215
----	-------------------------------------	-----

II

SONGS OF NATURE

	PAGE
1. SONG OF THE WATERFALL	219
2. THE SURF-WAVES' BOOM	221
3. THE WIND	223
4. TO ECHO !	225
5. SUNRISE	230
6. THE SILVERY MOON	231
7. THE WOOD-NYMPHS	234
8. THE UNDINE	236
9. THE ATOLL	238
10. THE STATUE OF MEMNON	239
11. ODE TO NIGHT	246
12. ANTARCTIC NIGHT	254
13. THE PHANTOM UNIVERSE	258

III

SONGS OF DEATH

1. MORS BENIGNA	262
2. MORS IRRISOR	269
3. THE WRECK OF THE <i>TITANIC</i>	276
4. SUNDERED HEARTS	282
5. BEAUTY DIES BUT IS ETERNAL	284

CONTENTS

129

	PAGE
6 ALAS, THE FAIREST DIE!	284
7 NEMESIS	286
8 SLEEP AND DEATH	287
9 LIFE'S EVENSONG	290

BOOK II

ECHOES OF HELLAS

I.—EROS AND PSYCHE

PART I

CHAPTER I

THE CURSE OF BEAUTY

IN a distant sunny island—
Lapped by waves like emerald glinting,
Crested white, or sapphire-tinted ;
And that like a rose in fragrance,
Shimmered bright beneath the heaven,
Whose high dome of purest turquoise
Arched above th' Ægean waters—
Lived a goodly royal couple,
Noted for their noble virtues,
Charity, and kindly bearing,
In the lands both near and distant.
Wider still, their fame extended
Through their daughters' grace and beauty ;
Flowers three, the Gods had given them
As the Moon marked Time's divisions,
Coursing o'er her heavenly pathway.
And each maid was fair of presence ;
Psyche, youngest, being fairest ;
And her charm of dainty sweetness
Daily grew beyond comparing.
So divine was Psyche's bearing
That no poet on the island

Dared describe her faultless beauty.
Nor would sculptor, in white marble,
Try to image her resemblance,
Or suggest that subtle perfect
Grace pervading all her being.
Nor could artist, with his pigments,
Hope to match her lovely tinting ;
Nor, with human skill, those smiling
Lips depict on finest fabric.
Only when, in strange intoning,
Music poured its stream melodic,
Making sad, with happy sadness,
Hearts oppressed with nameless anguish
Could the poet, sculptor, painter
Understand the wondrous image
Of the strangely lovely Psyche ;
For with sway of Music's cadence
Came a sense of sacred presence.
Thus in all around, the feeling
Swiftly grew that Psyche's beauty
Could not be mere mortal radiance ;
And the wisest lips were silent.
Thus at last no longer Psyche
Was to them mere rosy childhood,
Princess of but fifteen summers.
Saw they not in her reflexion
Of the beauteous Goddess, Cypris ?
Soon throughout the isles surrounding
Travelled then the pious legend,
That the Goddess Aphrodite
Had appeared as mortal being,
Once again on that fair island.

How the gracious royal parents
Shuddered at these strange divinings !
Shook their silky locks of silver,

When they heard the tale repeated,
Tale that seemed so godless, impious !
Yet when they themselves regarded
Psyche's ever radiant beauty ;
When they saw her eyes illumine
With a smile, as if from heaven ;
Even they were wonder-silent.
Overcome with dread forebodings
Thus they prayed in accents trembling :—
“ O, ye glorious Gods immortal ! ”
Said they in their vain endeavouring
To amend thought's strange enmeshing ;—
“ Grant us that, through grace and mercy,
We may sin not, through our folly,
Through distraction of our loving.”

And this youngest of the sisters,
Like a shimm'ring dewy violet,
Blossom'd forth in perfect moulding ;
Never knowing, ne'er suspecting,
What almighty power was given
To her, through the gift of beauty—
Brightest gem midst earthly treasures—
Beauty of such perfect radiance
As e'er wakens in our being
Sacred, strong and hopeful dreaming
Intertwined with holy mem'ries.

And though Time his pathway coursèd
Yet this beauty was unchanging
In its wondrous silent magic.
Thus the legend was established ;
And throughout that fairest island
Spread a joyous exultation
Through the lovely Psyche's presence.
And this pure and earth-born Goddess

Stilled all lower human stirrings
Till remained alone those longings,
Innocent and pure and holy,
Such as sweet and guileless childhood
Feels, when hands in prayer are clasped
At the sacred household altar,
To the image of the Goddess.
Many a prince from lands far distant
Came on embassy the highest,
And return'd with heart unquiet—
Yet with sense of inward blessing—
To his kindred and his kingdom.
And each prince towards home returning,
Wide his hands in prayer outstretching,
Looked on high to great Olympus,
Where, in heights of snow-white radiance,
Dwell the Gods in silent grandeur.
And above, the starry heavens
Seemed as if with joy pulsating.

“ O stern Gods,” said each, returning,
“ Ye whose wrath and high displeasure
To incur we may not venture ;
It were impious expectation
E'er to hope her hand in marriage,
For the Goddess' self is Psyche !
Saw we not a light illumine
Those blue eyes, with strange ensnaring
Power ? A glance of soft irradiance
Like to glow of heavenly flaming,
Such as ne'er belonged to flow'ret
Earth-born, mortal, weak and human ? ”

Even Psyche's little maiden,
Daily waiting on her mistress,
As she placed the snow-white chiton

On the rosy body, noticed
How its subtle soft irradiance
Seemed to lend enchanting beauty
To the spotless fine-spun garment.
At her joyous conversation
Or serene and happy chatter,
Oft the little maid stood wondering,
And believed, with strange discerning,
That one day her lovely mistress
Would ascend, as earth-born Goddess,
Through the air to great Olympus ;
And that she too, dust-born maiden,
Though unworthy, would be taken
There to serve in heavenly places,
Where ambrosia was, and nectar :
Ever thus was her day-dreaming.

And the days passed swift and swifter,
Days to moons, then years becoming.
Still the pious legend tarried,
Of the heavenly Goddess' presence
On this sea-empurpled island.
But poor Psyche wept in secret
When her graceful elder sisters
Both had wedded royal princes.
For she lived in lonely sadness
More like widow than like maiden ;
Lived amidst the spacious chambers
Of her royal father's household.

When Apollo's flaming chariot
Sank resplendent in the ocean,
Oft she wandered lost in dreamland,
Where the plash of wavelets restless
Seemed attuned to her own musings.
One by one, from the mysterious

Sapphire depths of highest heaven,
Shone the stars, with soft light glowing.
These she lightly whispering questioned ;
While the wavelets' plash, enticing
Seemed like lullaby caressing ;
As the waters undulating
Rose and fell as bosom heaving.
And they heard poor Psyche's whispers.
But the stars in silence glist'ning
Sweetly smiled their soft endearments ;
While the wavelets agitated
Clasped her feet, like pearls and roses.
World-forsaken, like a stranger,
Seemed the lovely lonely Psyche
Midst the round of human pleasures.
For her glance, divinely quiet,
By its sweet alluring magic,
Every human heart exalted.

But in secret, at their altar,
Psyche's pious parents shuddered
At the Gods' mysterious purpose
In their darling daughter's sorrow.
" Ah ! " cried Psyche, loudly sobbing,
To her mother gently clinging,
As she wept upon her bosom ;
" Have I erred ? What is my failing ?
Why is it that both my sisters
Long have wedded ; yet for no one
Have I felt that urgent longing—
Felt response to my heart hunger ?
Woe is me ! belovèd mother,
Am I hard and cold as marble ?
Yet I have within a yearning
Ever present, ever glowing,
For that One I see in dream-land ;

One with whom, with pious fervour,
I might worship in my loving."

At the sultry hour of noon-day
Slowly walking, on the pathway
Leading to the marble temple
Of Apollo, at Miletus ;
Came a wand'rer, thoughtful, earnest :
And his footsteps were directed
Towards the waters of the haven,
Where a shallop, for him ready,
Made of finest wood of olive,
Stood with mast and sails, awaiting.
And his bright and splendid garments
Lightly clad his noble body ;
As he walk'd with earnest bearing
And at times perplexèd aspect,
O'er the laurel-cover'd pathway.
Turning to the breeze his forehead
That perchance, its cooling contact
Might resolve his troubled thinking,
Thus he spake—this faithful servant
Of the monarch of the island :—

" Dare I venture to interpret
Oracle so strange, mysterious,
That its purpose and its import
Seem beyond me? Ah, poor Psyche,
Fairest of all earth-born maidens !
Oh that thou had'st ne'er been mortal,
Born as princess on this island ! "

And the faithful royal herald
Wept aloud, and yet was grateful,
That the beauty of his daughter
Less was prais'd than lovely Psyche's.

And he reached his trusty shallop
Lying in the quiet waters
Of the bay, and soon was hast'ning
O'er the kingdom of Poseidon.
And a fair wind blew the shallop
Swiftly through the crested wavelets.
From the rudder, regulating
Its direction, seemed to issue
Subtlest tones of sweetest music
As when Pan his flute is playing.

At the hour when day was ending,
Stood the long awaited herald,
In the noble airy chambers
Of his royal lord and mistress.
Through the marble columns flashing
Came the light with golden splendour ;
And it turn'd the distant wavelets
Into gold and royal purple.
In a neighbouring waiting-chamber
Psyche also listened, silent,
Knowing that the sacred guidance
From the temple of Apollo,
Was for her ; and that the counsel
Brought by old and faithful herald
From the temple of Miletus
Was to her of fullest meaning.
Thus she stood astonished, list'ning,
And her wondrous eyes of violet
Were bedimmed with tear-drops glist'ning.
Ah ! she dreamt not of her morrow
And what Destiny must bring her.
And she thought not, how fate, moving
Towards its certain ends imperious,
Would require her soul to ripen
And to blossom forth, through sorrow.

And the herald's words in silence
Died away ; then sudden outburst
Came, of woe and loud complaining,
As if all their hearts were breaking.
And she heard her father speaking ;
Heard the pained and measured utterance ;
In the Gods for ever trusting.
Came forth Psyche from the darkness,
Tear-drops in her eyes of violet.
Yet her rosy lips and tender
Shewed no sign of pain nor shrinking,
But a smile of happy radiance.
Then her fair white arms extending
She embraced her pious parents
Closing both their mouths with kisses ;
Filial, tender, fond caresses.
Thus she spake with heart deep-movèd :—

“ Everything, dear parents, hearing,
I have learnt that due obedience
To the Gods of highest heaven
Must be ever freely rendered
As our privilege and duty ;
Else must we incur their anger.
Gladly will I be the offering
For that error, pride, or folly
Which has honoured me as Goddess,
And abandoned Cypris' temple.”
Psyche's tears, and words caressing,
Urgent prayers, and fond entreating,
Softened soon the sorrow-stricken
Parents' hearts ; who, in the silence
Heard the words of Hope's fair whisp'ring
Then, upon the next Spring morning,
While the dew-drops still were glitt'ring
On the leafage and the flowers,

Flashing bright, yet quiet slumb'ring,
Came the sounds of loud complaining
To the city. And the people
In the Agora had crowded
Wishing all to hear the message,
That the Oracle had given
At Miletus; message holy
Which the God of Light had given,
Zeus's own great son Apollo,
Wisest brother of Athena.

And behold! That moment Psyche
Entered from the royal chamber,
Moved directly to the altar
Down those glist'ning steps of marble,
That for moons had been forsaken.
In the sight of all, then standing,
Clad in white and shimm'ring garments
All her flower-like beauty veiling,
Psyche bore a little branchlet,
On her left, of pomegranate;
While her silky golden tresses
Were entwined with dark-green myrtle
And those eyes of deepest violet
Glowed again with rarest lustre.
Yet no sign of fear, nor quailing,
Shew'd upon that face of beauty,
At her destiny uncertain.
And though passing to the temple,
For the last time, and as offering,
Yet her face was strangely happy;
Not a trace it shewed of sorrow.
But a young heart, pure and guileless
Well might ask that subtle question,
Question of mysterious import;
Which the stern Gods e'en call impious!

Toward the east, in that fair island,
Towered a mountain, rough, unfriendly ;
Whose ravines and rugged outline
Frown'd on high, o'er lovely valleys.
And when Psyche reached the fastness,
Came the long " farewell " to parents,
Kindred, people ; thus obedience
Shewing to the God's high purpose.
Then a mist her form enveloped
As the Gods had willed ; and Psyche
Thus devoted, separated
From her parents, friends, and kindred,
Calmly waited Fate's great issues.

Strange that Psyche's feet, so tender,
Felt not once the rugged surface,
As the mountain she ascended !
Strange too, that its thorns and briers
Never wounded, tore or pained her !
Strange the ascent e'er was easy,
And the wild brook, white and foaming,
Seemed to stay its wild commotion,
As it would her image firmly
Hold, in all its wondrous beauty.
And before the purple wavelets
Saw great Helios slowly sinking,
There she stood on mountain fastness
While the tender lovely body
In the cool air often shuddered.

Loudly throbbed in expectation
Psyche's heart ; yet she was weary
And upon a bed of herbage
Dry and poor, on stony surface,
Soon she sank in deepest slumber.

And although but ten days later
Bravest men, as bold as eager,
Climbed the mountain's wild recesses,
Yet they saw no trace of Psyche.
Came then twenty days of mourning
For the lovely royal princess ;
And thereafter only mem'ry
Grateful, strange, and ever sacred.
But at eve, when shades of slumber
Brought a respite to their sorrow,
Then the God of mystic Dreamland
Promised comfort to the parents
In these words of consolation :—

“ Sorrow not, O loving parents,
For your gracious royal daughter !
For such wondrous heavenly beauty
May not perish as the flow'rets,
But must live and bloom, forever.
Comfort ye, for your dear Psyche
Has for highest lot been chosen,
Fate, how rare for earth-born mortals !
For the spouse of one of heaven's
Glorious Gods, your lovely Psyche
Shall become ; alone is worthy.”

CHAPTER II

THE ISLE OF EROS

AND the gracious royal princess
In her snowy bridal chiton
Slept, as if in death's last slumber,
On the heights, unfriendly, lonely.

But the darkness of the lashes
Of her sleep-invested eyelids
Seemed illumined ; e'en while Eros
In the distant Orient heaven,
Heralded the Light-God's presence.
And the God of mystic Dreamland,
Who consoled both Psyche's parents
With his gracious words of comfort,
Came, when midnight's hour had vanished,
Whispering words of comfort also,
Words of wondrous consolation,
To the lovely sleeping Psyche.

" Weep not, weep not, bravest Psyche,
At the loss of thy dear parents ;
For thine earthly magic-beauty
May not wither as the flow'rets,
But its bloom shall be enduring.
Take then comfort, fairest Psyche,
Thou to highest lot art chosen,
Rarest fate of dust-born mortals !
For as spouse thou'rt consecrated
To a glorious God of heaven ;
And thou shalt for him be worthy,
Noble, brave, and lovely Psyche."

In her slumber, deep and peaceful,
With her golden tresses lying
On her arm, in lovely contrast
To its tints of rose and lily,
Psyche heard the God of Dreamland
Tell her fate, with face irradiant.
And around her lips half-closèd
Played a smile with yearning tender,
Like a subtle flame, and lambent,
Hovering o'er the rosy beauty.
But her ears caught not the murmur,

Of the branch of mountain bramble,
With the morning dew-drops glitt'ring,
In rebuke of reckless breezes
Of the West Wind, bleak and humid,
Rustling leaf and branchlet o'er her.
" O ungracious Zephyr, restless !
Seest thou not the world-forsaken
Lovely flow'ret by me lying,
Needing rest and consolation
In this grave-like lonely region ?
This fair body hast thou namèd
Often ; sought in sweet caressing : "
Gently then the West Wind, ceasing,
Thus too whisper'd :—" Rest, O dear one !
Rest thy fair belovèd body :
What I have to-day omitted
Will I gladly do to-morrow.
I shall ne'er disturb nor wake thee,
Gracious, brave and lovely sleeper ;
For to serve thee, when thou wakest,
The stern Gods have this day called me."

And a lovely tender flow'ret
Lingered, as if soft caressing,
As it flew on toward the Orient,
Where bold cliffs and rugged fastness
Frowned o'er dark and deep abysses.
And a dew-bejewelled chariot,
Brightly decked with tints of rainbow
Rested on the rocky ledges.
As this strange aërial chariot
Hovered o'er the deep abysses,
From the sea's great crystal grottoes,
With an ever sweet alluring,
Came the sounds of Nereids singing.

Then the icy breath of Dawning,
Fanned the forehead cold of Psyche
Till she woke ; and then, arising
From the bleak unfriendly surface,
Shudd'ring with half-frozen body,
Psyche stood, in anguish quiv'ring.

Then the Light-God's radiant presence
In the distance o'er the waters
Shewed in flood of golden glory.
Psyche stood there, watching, yearning,
Till at last came noon-day burning ;
And then mists, and troubled vision,
Cold, illusive, mind-perturbing.
Back to memory came her dreaming ;
And she sweetly smiled, though suffering.
Soon she reached the rocky ledges
Of the mountain's rugged summit.
Then her arms to heaven outstretching,
Still the pomegranate holding
With green leaf and flower of scarlet,
Loud she wept ; in sad lamenting
Upward gazing and despairing.
Thus she spake in plaintive accents :—

“ O ye Gods ! to whom are all things
Known ; and also known my folly ;
Grant, oh grant your gracious pardon
To your blind and foolish Psyche ;
For her strength no more availeth,
And these trials are beyond her.
O thou stern and cruel Goddess !
Say wherein are her offences.
And ye smiling sapphire wavelets,
Take her, bear her to the darkness,
To the silent realms of Hades,
Ah to death ! to death ! ”

The darkness

Heart-perplexing, weird, fantastic,
Sorely troubled Psyche's vision.
Pleading arms she then extended,
And her head with golden tresses
Bowed before her; and the branchlet,
Held by her, of pomegranate
From her gentle hands was falling.
But it fell not in the laughing
Sunny surface of the Ocean.
For quite lost in dreamland, Zephyr,
Waiting in his magic chariot,
Where he sat with arms enfolded,
Suddenly awakening, turned him.
On the air-swept dewy surface
Of the great ærial chariot
Psyche lay. He saw her resting
With her face directed downwards.
At her left hand closely nestling
Lay the branch of pomegranate.
And the God of Youth and Beauty
Smiling, seemed in meditation.
Then toward orient heaven directed
Were his eyes, of shining radiance.
And exultant through the æther
Thus he sang in accents joyous :—

“ Huzza ! Huzza ! my servants winged ;
Let us, flying through the æther,
Bear our lovely precious burden
Toward the magic land of beauty,
As the stern Lord hath commanded.
And reward for faithful service,
Shall be mine, for he has promised.
And the youngest nymph-like beauty

Of his laurel, rose-crowned island
Shall be wholly mine for ever."

And the sleep-imprisoned Psyche,
Seeming lifeless as a marble
Image, through the air was carried
In the splendid magic chariot,
Where she lay in peaceful slumber
With her lovely face directed
Downward toward the sapphire ocean
With all outer vision shrouded,
Psyche saw not aught around her ;
Nor the fair and wondrous island,
By the deep-blue waves surrounded ;
And from whence arose the myriad
Host of lesser Gods, whose pinions
Shone like wings of gold ; or shimmer'd
Like ten thousand rarest roses,
Flying round the magic chariot ;
First before and then beside it,
Lightly hovering, sweetly singing,
Singing Heaven's great Hymenæus
With exulting happy chorus !

" Hail ! O earth-born bride of Heaven !
Hail ! thou fortune-favoured maiden !
Slumber still in beauty radiant,
For in joy thou'lt soon awaken,
And thy soul be filled with gladness,
In the ardour of caressing,
That like flaming stream shall issue
From the mouth divine of Eros.
Hail ! thou earth-born bride of Heaven !
Hail ! O Psyche, spouse of Eros ! "

Swiftly then vanish'd Zephyr
Like a phantom scene from Dreamland,

For his mission was accomplished
As commanded by great Eros.
Softly on a bed of violets
Rested now the slumbering Psyche
In the shadows of the myrtles,
Verdant margin of the island.
For this isle with shore enmargined
By the myrtles, laurels, olives,
And with bowers of rarest roses,
Jasmine, and rich perfumed flow'rets,
Was the paradise of Eros—
Of the mighty Gods, enthronèd
High above the Gods of Heaven—
When he wished to rest in quiet ;
Not in all his Godhead's splendour
But transformed as an ephebos
With all adolescent graces.

Only when the shades were deep'ning
Of the quiet peaceful twilight
Woke the lovely slumb'rer, Psyche,
From her sleep, death-simulating.
And she woke midst bowers of fragrance,
Wondrous-sweet, intoxicating ;
Where the stir of leaf and flow'ret
Sounded like a harp æolian.
Psyche gazed with eyes astonished.
" Am I then in land Elysian ? "
'Twas her eyes that asked the question.
" Am I really on the island
Where without alloy of sorrow
Dwell the shades of mighty heroes ? "

With a friendly silence answering
These her wonder-questions, urgent,
Bent a tree of rarest beauty

With its purple-crimson fruitage.
Psyche, then her arm outstretching
Plucked the fruit, which, scarcely eaten,
Yielded glow of joyous feeling
And a strange new life refreshing,
As when from her bath of marble
Psyche came; but how much greater
Was this sense of life and rapture.
And behold! a smiling streamlet
Rippling in the shadow secret
Of luxuriant bowers of roses,
As if pleading for caresses!

Psyche kneeling then, and bending
O'er the stream her golden tresses,
Drank and drank. Then came a surging
Of new life and strength; and agile
Blithesome, joyous, tender feeling.
Suddenly she saw her image
Timid, from the water gazing.
By its beauty, deeply movèd,
She arose, and in her bosom
Felt the stir and strong pulsation
Of unknown, undreamt of raptures.
"O thou fair land of the blessèd!"
Cried she, in an impulse grateful.
"O thou fair land of the blessèd!"
Rang out then the voice of Echo.
"May I not," so questioned Psyche,
"Here see also eyes that answer?"
"Eyes that answer," then repeated
Joyfully the voice of Echo.
"Ah, and whither shall I seek them?"
"Seek them," counsell'd then that happy
Friendly answering nymph-voice; "seek them."
Then she wandered happy, holding

Still the branchlet, richly flowering,
Of the scarlet pomegranate
In her left hand, tightly claspèd.
Then upon this isle of gladness
Sank the deeper shades of evening.

But there came not, with the shadows,
Shudd'ring from the cold and darkness;
For with ev'ry suspiration
Warmer seemed the gentle zephyrs.
Ah ! how blossomed then the myrtles,
Laurels, figs, and trees of olive !
And from out the deep green shadows,
Psyche thought, with strange enticing,
That she saw illumined faces—
Like the star-flowers—at her peering.
And a marvel-song resounded
In her ears, with power enticing ;
And the fragrance and the glowing
Seemed a gentle soft compulsion
Toward a place of sweet allurements,
Where, midst bowers of loveliest roses
Sang the nightingales in thousands,
Loudly, sweetly, full of passion.
Listen ! 'Tis the song repeated !
“ Hail, thou earth-born bride of Heaven !
Hail, thou Goddess of the Future !
Hail, O Psyche ! spouse of Eros ! ”

Joy-astonished and enchanted,
Psyche seemed, transfixed, beholding
In the thickest bloom of myrtles
And of bays, a lovely lakelet,
On which floated whitest lilies.
In the midst of this fair lakelet,
As it were upon an island,

Ah, behold ! a glittering temple,
With its sacred columns sculptured
With the forms of sprays of roses.
And this white and rarest temple
Seemed to crown a nest for slumber,
Decked with snowy-shimm'ring feathers.
Seeing this, fair Psyche sighing,
Whispered thus her inward longing :

“ Ah how gladly I would rest me
In that peaceful slumber-chamber !
And awaken in the morning,
Then, to see the eyes that answer,
As that sweet-voiced nymph has promised.”

And these words were scarcely whispered
By those lips like rarest coral,
Guileless words of pious longing,
When commenced a wondrous movement
Of the blossoms on the water.
Then the white swans swam together
Forming silently a pathway,
Silver-glitt'ring, to the island.

Instantly the royal princess
Saw the meaning of this wonder ;
And with fearless grateful feeling
Placed her feet, so rosy, pearl-like
On the living snowy pathway :
Thus she reached the sacred island.
“ Warmest thanks,” said Psyche, smiling,
As she watched the swans dispersing,
With their clear eyes friendly glancing.
And as one, to whom in Dreamland,
Comes some mighty intuition,
Psyche stood transfixed, thus thinking :—

“ O great Gods ! what precious forecast
Of my life seems sweetly dawning
In my heart, with joy abounding.”

And to rest, with placid gladness,
That her soul might feel the pulses
Of the waves in worlds of dreaming,
Psyche laid her on the pillow,
Where amidst the glow of colour
Of the bowers of perfect fragrance,
Soon her eyes were closed in slumber.

Then, in Night's dark shroud enveloped,
Suddenly she shrank in terror !
Till she felt the soft embracing
Of two arms, with love-inflaming
Power ; then on her lips, desirous,
Such a rain of ardent kisses
As poor mortals scarce can suffer,
Heart-enrapturing, soul-consuming ;
While the darkness seemed illumined
By two eyes of rare effulgence,
Eyes whose glorious magic radiance
Flashed through Psyche's inmost being.

“ O my Psyche ! My beloved !
O my soul ! My lovely Psyche ! ”
And these words of rapture entered
Ev'ry deep of Psyche's being.
Ev'ry conscious thought and feeling
Vanished in the wild and stormy,
Mad and glowing, soul-inflaming
Sweetest love-intoxication.

And a young grey lark was waiting
By the shores of that fair island,
Longing for the hour of dawning ;

That again his high flight winging
Upwards to the rarest æther,
He might sing his silvery greeting
To the radiant new-born glory
Of another happy morning.
Still the lovers were in keeping
Of the joy-propitious darkness.
When at last from Psyche's eyelids
Fled the rapturous blessed Slumber ;
And with Dreams, his lovely children,
In the clear blue æther vanish'd ;
In the ravish'd ears of Psyche
Rang the wondrous voice of Eros,
Tender, earnest, pensive, saddened
Almost, but with happy sadness.

" O belovèd ! Lovely Psyche !
Highest raptures, glow ecstatic
Shall be thine, my Psyche, ever,
While the moon her pathway courses,
If thou never, rashly curious,
Seek to see me, dare to question
Whence I am, or what mysterious
Place is mine in great creation.
Speak, mine own belovèd Psyche ;
Wilt thou thus be faithful ever ? "

Then in tender warm embracing
Round the neck of her adorèd—
As he lay by darkness hidden—
Psyche placed her arms caressing ;
And her lips with magic swiftness
Found the God's, with untold rapture.
When her heart's impetuous tumult
Was appeased with burning kisses,
Spake she thus with utt'rance earnest :—

" O belovèd ! since I have thee,
 Since I feel thee, near me, near me,
 All my past, its gladness, sadness,
 Seem but dream-life's misty image.
 Shall I then with rash inquiring
 Ask to see thee ; whence thou comest ?
 Do I not possess thee, dearest ?
 Is it not, O well-belovèd !
 As if we were one ; united ? "

" Psyche, dear one, well-belovèd,
 Wait my coming in the shadow
 Of the mystic rapturous darkness.
 For I hear stern Fate commanding—
 And his strong will none may question.
 Ah, too, in thy heart, O Psyche !

.
 Farewell then, O well-belovèd !
 If thou truly lovest, never,
 Never once forget my warning."

CHAPTER III

PSYCHE'S SISTERS

Oh, how rich in all expression
 Of our deepest thoughts and feelings,
 And how noble in its music,
 Is our subtle, human language !
 Yet how cold and poor and lifeless,
 And how colourless, unfeeling,
 It appears, when we would image
 In it all the radiant glory,
 All the rosy-tinted splendours

Of our first love's dreams and raptures.
'Tis alone the Lord of Music
Who can give it full expression.
For the perfect comprehension
Of its joyous exultation,
And its ecstasy mysterious,
Needs must be a guileless spirit,
Clear, serene, and sympathetic
Soul, unmoved by errant willing,
Such a soul as finds its dwelling
Only in the sacred bosoms
Of the Gods of highest Heaven.

And the raptures of reunion
Left such glow of reminiscence,
That the gracious lovely Psyche
Never felt the hours were creeping
Only slowly on toward nightfall,
That enshrouded sweetest slumber.
When the golden beams of morning
Rose from out the orient ocean,
Psyche wandered radiant, happy,
And in glowing exaltation.
And the streamlet's limpid rippling,
And the forest's foliage rustling,
And the eyes of every creature,
Gave her this, the greatest message,
Many-voiced but one in essence,
In her spirit thus surrounding :—
“ O my Psyche, my belovèd.”
And by day how sweet her dreaming
Of the night's ecstatic transports.
Yet her dreams were ever happy.
Neither haste nor sorrow troubled
Her ; although her heart was longing
For his rapturous caresses

In the darkness ; ever bringing
New and wondrous soul-allurement—
Ecstasy all thought o'erwhelming.

Far away upon the island
By the restless waves surrounded,
Where enthroned were Psyche's parents,
Spread a myth, that their lost princess
On a rosy cloud of heaven
Had ascended to Olympus,
There to dwell in high assembly
Of the Gods, their glories sharing.
Truly, it must be great Eros,
Said they, who has tak'n our Psyche ;
He, the glorious God of Heaven ;
He who human hearts for ever
Holds in thrall of Love's strong forging.

Each of Psyche's sisters hearing
Soon this wondrous sacred legend,
Felt the stir of secret envy ;
For their marriages were loveless.
And the story of their sorrows
Grieved the agèd royal couple,
Simple, peaceful, gentle, gracious.
But the sisters were astonished,
Hating Psyche in their envy.

As they both were standing, lonely,
At the mountain's foot, and wond'ring :—
“ Dost thou think,” thus spake the elder :—
Quick the other interrupted :—
“ Yes, I think that our poor Psyche ” :—
“ That our Psyche ? ”

“ Has not vanish'd
From the hosts of living beings,
But endures, though well concealèd

From our purblind human vision,
With a God of light and glory.”
Then together Psyche’s sisters :—
“ Are we not to be permitted
Once again to see our sister ?
We would gladly for this blessing
Make surrender of our spouses.”

And their envious hearts grew curious.
In the light of early morning
Both were on the dizzy ledges,
Frowning boldly o’er the ocean,
Where their sister stood despairing,
When she thought to plunge in ocean.
“ Tell us where thou tarriest, Psyche ;
Tell us, O belovèd sister,
Where thou art, that we, thy sisters,
May rejoice in thy rejoicing,
In thy well-deserved rewarding.”

Lo ! What wonder now has happened !
See ! Before they could recover
From their fear and consternation,
Both were by the stern commandment
Of the Gods, to pass like Psyche
To the island. And the West Wind,
Damp and bleak, threw each ungently
Into his aerial chariot,
As a busy maid flings roughly
Some coarse newly cleansèd raiment,
That she almost has forgotten
At the white and foaming brooklet.

Scarce awakened from their swooning,
Were these envious loveless sisters,
When they saw th’ enchanted island,

And its temple, rose-embowered.
And they, seeing, knew its meaning.
" Spouse of some great God of Heaven,"
Said the sisters, realising
That their sister had found favour
Far above all frailer mortals.
But around both bird and flower,
Tree and streamlet seem'd to hasten
To escape their noxious presence,
Or, in horror stark, to wither.
And the sisters saw their Psyche
On the island in the lakelet,
Midst her bowers of rarest roses ;
By the shore where she was resting ;
Gazing strangely into Dreamland
But with eyes that seemed directed
Downward into limpid waters.
And they heard her softly singing :—
" O my soul, my well-belovèd."

From the shore across the lakelet
Loudly cried the sisters :—" Psyche."
Ah what great delight of greeting
Psyche shewed, as thus astonished,
She beheld her sisters calling ;
Stretching out her arms, inviting,
And as wishing to embrace them.
For she loved her sisters fondly
Though in absence nigh forgotten.
How their hearts were torn with envy
When they saw that Psyche's beauty
Had become, through Eros' presence,
Subtler, nobler, still more radiant !
And their hearts, thus envy-poisoned,
Were o'ercome, surprised, bewildered,
When they saw the swans obedient

To her mandate :—" For thy mistress
Build a pathway o'er the lakelet."

When they saw, too, Psyche hastening
O'er the snow-white living pathway.

Psyche then embrac'd her sisters,
For their jealous poison-kisses
Joyful kisses warm exchanging.

And when Psyche thus caress'd them
And they felt her kisses, glowing
Through their bodies' ev'ry fibre,
Each a wondrous palpitation
Felt, and pensive melancholy.

" Such a glow comes not from mortal
Merely, but from deep recesses
Of a soul, when lips are kindled
By the flame of Heaven's kisses !
And our spouses ! Ah, how wretched
Are we in our loveless bondage ! "

Thus the sisters thought, repining.
Wider grew the separation
Of their souls ; and stronger also
Grew the poison-weed of envy ;
When their sister, naïvely happy,
Shewed them all the magic treasures
Of her radiant little kingdom,
And its wealth, beyond believing.

Then exclaimed the elder sister,
At such happy Fate astonished :—
" Ah, the God of Light and Glory,
Lord of mightiest power and magic,
Must thy spouse be, ardent, loving !
And I see thy charm and beauty,
Like the dew on roses sparkling,
That, at night their buds unfolding,
Blossom forth in full perfection.

Ah ! it must be ; can I doubt it ?
That the Lord of all these treasures,
Of thy heart too, like thee, Psyche,
Is, in lineaments and image."

To these words of lurking malice,
Psyche naïvely answer'd smiling.
" We are like in form and image ?
Oh, I must, belovèd sisters,
Must believe it, as I nightly
Clasp him in the happy darkness,
Ah ! "

Her eyes of deepest violet
Glow'd again, with love-lit radiance,
In the memories of those raptures
That the veil of night had given,
" Ask not further, dear belov'd ones,"
Then said Psyche, hearing faintly
Warning words that linger'd sweetly :—
" O belovèd ! Lovely Psyche !
Highest raptures, glow ecstatic
Shall be thine, my Psyche, ever,
While the moon her pathway courses,
If thou never, rashly curious,
Seek to see me, dare to question
Whence I am, or what mysterious
Place is mine in great creation.
Speak, mine own belovèd Psyche ;
Wilt thou thus be faithful ever ? "

Psyche, in her inmost being
Deeply moved, was standing silent.
Then she spake again :—" O dear ones,
" See ! I do entrust my keeping
To my spouse with faith unchanging ;

But my tongue is all too childish
To unravel this strange mystery.
So, dear sisters, rest assurèd
That your Psyche's safe and happy,
And each night in glowing rapture
Passes to the realms of Heaven
In the sacred arms, caressing.
Try not, dear ones, to discover
That which never hath distressed me."

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And the sisters, hearing Psyche
Pure, and happy-souled and guileless,
Thus her joy of heart expressing,
Then determined ne'er to let her
See their sly and crafty cunning.
And they grew more greedy, envious,
When they parted, rich rewarded
By their generous loving sister,
Ere the sun had set in glory.
Thus in malice, seeming tender,
Spake the crafty, evil sisters :—
" Fare thee well, our dearest sister ;
Were we able, we would gladly
Save thee, in our fond affection,
From the long day's desolation,
All its weariness and silence."
When at last the evil sisters
Had departed in th' aerial
Chariot, to their destination,
Psyche stood alone, thus thinking :—
" From my long day's desolation,
All its weariness and silence ! "
Then above she saw descending,
Like the swoop of mighty eagle,
That sweet darkness :—

“ O belovèd ! ”

In her heart again resounded,
Drowning every thought and feeling,
Like the rain that from the flow’ret
Sweeps away the bright-winged insect.
And when—forecast of the dawning—
Came the hour of separation
In the sweetly fragrant darkness
Of the bowers of myrtles, roses ;
Then again with tender sadness
Rang the voice of urgent warning :—
“ Psyche, Psyche ! well-belovèd !
Ah, beware and fret thee never
As to me ; remember only
This, that thou indeed art happy
And thy heart, in blind adoring,
Shall command its highest raptures.
Who has fortune, rarely knows it ;
Who is happy, questions never.
Ah, beware thee of thy sisters !
Should I wake some sad grey dawning
But to find a separation
By stern fate compelled for ever,
Know, O Psyche ! my belovèd !
Know that through thee, through thee only
To us both can come such sorrow.”

But the Lord of Love, Almighty,
Was by Psyche’s ears unheeded.
For both bright and dreary futures
Were unroll’d before the vision
Clear and penetrant, of Eros.
And ’twas thus he saw that higher
Greater, nobler, strenuous pathway,
That poor mortals all must travel
Ere they can endure the glory,

All the full and perfect rapture
Of the Gods, in highest heaven.

And before their separation
Lips and face and forehead kissing,
Breath'd he, in her ear, the whisper
Old, but ever new in rapture :—
“ Fare thee well, mine own beloved one !
Truly loving, thou wilt never
Once forget my earnest warning.”

CHAPTER IV

TEMPTATION

IN the universal Silence,
Far beyond the countless glitt'ring
Stellar worlds, sat Heaven's Eros,
Lord of Earth, and Earth's affections.
And he pondered, moved and lonely,
While a sad and melancholy
Smile o'erspread that radiant visage,
Grand, majestic, lofty, gracious.
For to his divine prevision
All the Future's Light and Darkness,
Was unrolled, and stood revealèd.
“ Ah, it must be ! ” said he softly ;
And the great tones seem'd like sighing.
“ Ah, it must be ! So wills Moira.
All on earth that wander, mortal,
As the gold in hottest furnace,
Must be purged of dross and fitted
For the glowing, pure, seraphic,
Ever-burning, glorious radiance

Of high heaven's eternal splendour.
Ah belovèd, lovely Psyche !
Oh, why should'st thou? " . . .

Once again insurgent longing
Moved the Lord of Love and splendour,
Now once more the earthly Eros.

Through the stellar æther ocean
Swept, with silent golden winging,
Towards the earth, the high God, Eros,
To the perfumed bowers, that nightly
Shadowed his great wondrous presence ;
When to feel our earthly rapture
He elected. For great Eros
Chose to temper his high pleasure
With our human limitations,
And confine his glorious ardour
In an earthly seraph-bosom.
But how swiftly sped the minutes
That brought near the pallid dawning.
When his soft but urgent warning
Came to his belovèd Psyche,
Guarding her against her sisters'
Evil words of poisoned envy.

Often to th' enchanted island
Came again poor Psyche's sisters.
And the more they saw of Psyche's
Beauty, charm, and gracious bearing,
And of all the island's splendour,
So the deeper grew the envy
In their evil, crafty spirits,
Full of darkest ill-will, boding.

" Wherefore hath our simple sister
Thus deserved such heavenly blessings?

For as clear as is the æther,
Or the skies of blue above us,
So 'tis clear she hath been chosen
As the spouse of one of Heaven's
Greatest Gods." And ah ! a mocking
Evil intuition whispered,
" Oh, that we had learnt from Psyche
How was named her glorious lover,
What his place was, in creation !
Then, ——"

With evil haste came flowing
Swift from lips of both the sisters :
" Shall not Psyche's fortune vanish,
And her star go down in darkness ?
For the Gods are all vexatious
And like men are most capricious,
Moody, even madly errant
In their high demands, exacting."

Slowly, subtly, dawned in Psyche's
Mind and heart, this false alluring
Wish to see her well-belovèd.
" Ah, believe us," said the eldest,
As all three, at hour of midday,
Sat beneath the light soft shadows
In a lovely bower of myrtles ;
While the gleam of gold and silver
And of precious gems, and rarest
Richest garniture, adorning
Their small table, seemed to flicker
Ever strangely. And above them
Sang a bird in sad despairing,
Hid from sight, on branch of myrtle.
Then the eldest spake, with scorning
Bitter cruel words and biting.

“ Ah, believe us, if thy spouse is
Thus afraid of heaven’s own radiance,
And will never let thee see him,
Neither see his face nor body,
Which you vainly think is human .
In its form, he is a monster !
Some great grim and frightful dragon !
One to whom the day is hateful ;
One, who dare not his reflection
E’er behold in streamlet’s mirror ;
Or who dare not view his shadow
As it follows or precedes him.
Hast thou not in thine own childhood
From thy nurse heard many stories
Of the toads, the serpents, dragons ? ”

“ Truly,” said the second sister,
“ I must call it most unseemly
In thy spouse and strangely heartless.
Such desire is shameless, evil.
Has his wife, who he e’er flatters
Is beloved above all others,
Not a right—both just and holy—
Then, to see her lord, her husband,
In the pure and open daylight ?
Art thou not the merest plaything ?
Were I Psyche, dearest sister,
Long ago I should have seen him
As he lay by me and slumbered.
For I would my lamp have lighted
And I would——”

“ My dearest sisters,
Say no more, I cannot listen,”
Pained and earnest, broke in Psyche ;
Scarcely hearing their suggestions :

For the words brought such remembrance
Of her spouse, her well-belovèd,
Of his kisses' glow in darkness,
Of the sweet o'erpow'ring magic
Of his voice : . . .

Again the West Wind
Bore her sisters from the island
Ah ! alas ! it bore not also
From her thought their evil speeches.
As when, in a wild burst sweeping,
Clouds of dust o'erwhelm a myrtle,
Flecks thereof remain imprisoned
By its leaves and flow'rs and branches ;
So the sisters' gust of envy
Left its soiling on her being.
Secret doubt and fear mistrusting
Slowly crept into the joyous,
Loving, guileless soul of Psyche.
Thus at last came strange discov'ry
That the days were long and lonely.
Then she saw her sisters gladly ;
Heard with zest their conversation,
Blindly drinking in the poison
That from envious lips was pouring ;
Words of malice, soul-destroying.

But at parting, sadly whispered
This her spouse ; unseen in darkness,
In the fragrant rosy bowers ;
Where his eyes, with magic glowing,
Shone with radiant nuptial gladness.
" Ah, belovèd ! Oh, beware thee !
For I feel forecast of sorrow,
Sorrow of our separation ;
Oh, beware, belovèd Psyche !

Lest we be for ever parted."

" ' Ever parted ? ' Knowest thou, dear one
What such words contain of anguish ? "

Psyche wept. " Ah, never, never ! "

Cried she, sobbing, wildly clinging,

As she kissed her spouse beloved.

" Ah, remember, Psyche, Psyche ;

Keep thee faithful to thy promise ! "

Thus spake Eros, ere he vanished,

Like a cloud, in azure æther.

Then once more came Psyche's sisters ;

Saw the tear-stains and the weeping ;

And surprised and angry, seeming,

Thus spake they with voice envenomed.

" Ha ! the cruel hateful monster !

Has he then in wicked anger

Cruelly our Psyche beaten ?

Has the monster almost killed her ? "

" Silence ! Silence ! dearest sisters,"

Said the unsuspecting Psyche.

" Woe is me ! Why will ye tempt me ? "

" Sister, sister ! " said they weeping,

" Art thou truly not our sister ?

And thy joy not our joy also ? "

Then poor Psyche pled forgiveness

While, with evil inner gladness,

Both the sisters held their victim ;

Leading her, all unsuspecting,

On the path of mistrust faithless.

" Merely this," advised the elder :—

" When he lies in deepest slumber

By thy side, then turn thee gently,

Slowly, on his arm, in darkness.
Then for once, and once, dear, only,
Kindle a small lamp; then seeing
Him thou lovest, sweet assurance
Shall be thine for ever, ever,
That thou'rt not a dragon's booty.
Aye, and should he then awaken,
Dost thou think, O dearest sister,
That a God, a great God, truly
E'er could leave thee, e'er abandon
His dear spouse? Oh, that were dreadful.
If he truly love thee, wholly
In his heart, then, dearest Psyche,
He will surely freely pardon.
Surely in the end he'll praise thee,
Laud thine eager wish to see him,
Treat thy disobedience lightly,
Name it but an indiscretion,
For a fault, condoned, discovering
Amiable and gentle phrases.
Is not Love's most urgent question
Such as asks this undertaking?
Oh, my dearest sister Psyche,
Why should I e'er be thy tempter?
Tempt thee, dearest sister, tempt thee?
What reproach! to hear thus spoken
By mine own belovèd sister!
No, ah, no! 'tis he would prove thee;
He, th' unknown, by Night thus hidden;
He would know how great thy love is;
Whether, from thine inmost being,
Pours forth love that has no limit;
If he have thy soul-love, Psyche!"

And with dove-like eyes, the other
Ofttimes spoke with tender seeming;

Thoughts expressing, like her sister's,
Treacherous, asp-like, in their venom.
When at last they left poor Psyche
Stunned, bewildered and tormented ;
" Ah ! " she cried, " would that my sisters
" Came not here, though kind their meaning,
Full of sisterly affection."

Long she pondered, sad and weeping.

" Hide me ever, thou sweet darkness,
In thy veil, by magic woven
From the glow of Love's caresses !
Oh, that Day, with sad tormenting
Would for ever fade from Being ! "

And the laurels, fig-trees, myrtles,
Cast their lengthening evening shadows,
As poor Psyche slowly wandered
Towards her bower upon the island.
On the lakelet's shore then standing,
Psyche called the white-winged cygnets ;
And the spotless snowy chiton
Scarcely hid her rosy contours.
On that white-wing'd, flower-like pathway,
Psyche lightly trod, returning
To the fragrant sacred Temple.
But alas ! to-day she waited
Longer for her Lord's returning.
And the warm sense of his presence,
And the mem'ries sweet of darkness,
All its mystery and rapture
Seemed extinguished, leaving only
But a faint fantastic shimmer.

" How ungracious, doubting, foolish,
Faithless, have I been in list'ning ! "

Thus she spake with troubled accents.
" Come, oh come, my spouse belovèd !
That once more in thy caressing
I may feel again exalted,
Feel again I am delivered
From the thrall of thoughts accursèd ;
Thoughts that never were thy Psyche's.
Come, oh come, my spouse belovèd ! "

And he came. But when departing,
As the eastern sky was glowing
With the forecast of the dawning,
" Ah ! " he urged, in sad and earnest
Words, which seemed like tones æolian,
In a plaintive cadence warning :—
" Hast thou faith in me, O Psyche ?
Wilt thou never ask whence came I ?
Seek to see me, vainly curious ? "

Psyche placed her arms caressing
Round the neck of her dear lover.
Then with fervid glowing kisses
Thus she whispered :—" Ah ! believing
Makes me richer far than knowing.
Oh, thy love with joy enswathes me,
And I feel with thee united."

" O my Psyche ! my belovèd !
Ah 'tis well, what thou hast spoken."
Thus spake Eros. Then at parting
Once more came his earnest warning :—
" Fare thee well, dear lovely Psyche ;
If thou lovest, thou wilt ever
This, thy promise, well remember."
From the fragrant rosy darkness
In those bowers of heavenly raptures

Once again Great Eros vanished
As a fleck of cloud in sunlight ;
While the radiant glow of Dawning
Loud acclaimed the jubilation
Of the day new-born in splendour.

Psyche still remained there, resting
Pillowed on her arms and gazing
Upwards through the inf'nite æther.
And the roses in her bower,
Downward hanging, seemed unconscious
Of her presence ; yet perceiving
From her subtle voiceless language
That her heart was flutt'ring strangely.

But above the fragrant blossoms
Of that wondrous home of rapture,
From a nest, snow-white and fleckless,
Sang a young and hidden nestling
Such a song of lamentation,
Helpless, hopeless, sad, despairing
Tones, that seemed as it were saying :—
“ O my Psyche ! my beloved !
Wherefore wilt thou thus forsake me ? ”

CHAPTER V

PSYCHE'S LAMP

ONCE again the lovely Psyche
With her evil, envious sisters
Sat beneath the myrtle's shadows.
Smiling, thus began the elder :—
“ Dearest child ! With many treasures,

Such as only Gods can fashion,
Hast thou sent us home rewarded.
And we think of thee, dear, also
With sweet promptings of affection.
May we then, poor earth-born mortals,
Ask of thee a kind acceptance
Of a lamp of rarest beauty ;
Fashioned by the greatest artists
Of our lovely native island ?
True, dear, 'tis a worthless trifle
When with thy great gifts comparèd ;
Yet among thy household treasures
Is there aught of greater service
Than a homely lamp ? And, Psyche,
Such a lamp has many uses
For a wife, in hours of darkness."

Psyche took the perfect sculptured
Offering of her evil sisters
In her hand, and quickly noticed
On its rim, the lovely figures
Sculptured there. She saw, astonished,
Fat and chubby priests of Bacchus
With their brightly flaming torches,
Boldly entering the darkness -
Of a forest.—

Ah, how strangely
Thoughtful then her blue eyes rested
On the golden lamp's fine carving !
But she spake no word of pleasure,
Or of thanks to either sister,
But began her converse gaily
With the jewelled lamp beside her,
Never once to it referring.
And her sisters both were thinking :—

“ Thou hast fallen, silly nestling,
In the snare that we are laying.
Perhaps thou art the spouse, O Psyche !
Of some unknown God of Heaven ;
His belovèd secret darling.
But thou art, too, still our sister,
And, like us, but merely earth-born,
Fragile, fading mortal being.
Silently we read thee, Psyche.
And we see the evil seedling
In the depths of thine own spirit,
Through thy blue eyes, heart-responsive
Ha ! and then ? ”

Beyond this feeling
Neither sister found within her
With the other, aught in common ;
Each herself, in secret, hoping
For herself this God of Heaven
Soon to win ; and hoping also
In their ill-begotten malice,
That they might their lovely sister
Thrust away from this fair island.

Wretched, evil, envious sisters !
Never could ye, even faintly
Shed abroad that sweetest radiance
That, like shining star, is gleaming
From the face and form and tresses
Of your lovely sister Psyche.
In your pride and ill-complaining
Ye are evil, dark, unsightly,
As that dread abyss, ye see not ;
Though 'twill sunder you for ever.

Earlier this day than their custom
These two sisters left their Psyche ;
That their venom-gift its poison
Might instil ; its evil working
Soon secure her certain downfall,
In the hours of lonely waiting.
Unsuspecting, Psyche wished them
Both a happy home-returning.

Swift away the West Wind bore them
To the cliffs of that fair island,
Where the grey and aged parents
Passed their quiet days and lonely.
At the rocky steep, the light-winged
God then left his magic chariot,
Shining, glitt'ring as the dewdrops,
As it fluttered down the rocky
Dreadful, yawning, deep abysses.
Flying upward through the æther,
Laughing at the sisters' ending,
He himself soon disappearèd
Like the images of dreamland.

In their terror, loudly shrieking,
Thus these evil, envious sisters
Through the ocean's deep recesses
Passed to that strange realm of darkness,
Hopeless shadow-world of Hades !

Many an hour of lonely waiting
Now remained, ere friendly darkness
Brought with it the consolation
Of her Lover's glowing presence.

Ah ! how long it seemed to Psyche,
Since she saw the golden shimmer
Of a lamp, its gleam and flashing.

On the distant holy altar,
Hung with wreaths of rarest blossoms,
Near the shore, she saw the flicker
Of the flame ; that seemed as smiling.
There she found, too, oil of olives.
Psyche then no more resisting
That strange, errant, evil impulse—
Which, like imp of mischief playing,
Seemed to clutch those rosy fingers—
Kindled then the lamp her sisters
Gave her, with this dire intention.
This she did although great Helios'
Giant flame still graced the azure.
But the lamp burnt sad and feebly
As if dying, flick'ring, troubled.

Yet when Night's dark pall had fallen,
Then the flame was cheery, brighter.
And with many an imp-like stirring
Seemed, by strangest whispers, tempting.
Psyche with a childish gladness
Watched the gleaming and the glitter.
Grasping it, with sudden horror,
Psyche saw the flame dividing !
Then it flashed, with brilliance blinding,
Dancing like two imps, around her.
In a moment all was darkness,
All the play and gleam extinguished ;
Yet she thought not of the portent,
Blinded to the God's last warning.

Once again her lamp was burning
In the magic forest's darkness,
With its cheery light and glitter.
Psyche felt like child contented
With the yellow glow and flicker,

And the scene's strange transformations.
Then she hastened toward her bower ;
In her garb her lamp concealing,
With a strangely sad regretting.
And she waited for his coming
With a tender earnest longing.
But in Psyche's ardent bosom
Now there lurked desire forbidden,
Stronger than her urgent longing
For the rapturous heavenly kisses.

In the mystic bonds of slumber
Eros lay beside his Psyche.
But her soul was wild and stormy
And her heart, now beating wildly,
Seem'd as if constrained to breaking.

Slowly, on their festal pathway
In the sapphire-tinted æther,
All the countless stars were coursing.
But their eyes, so quiet, friendly,
Saw not now the roses smiling ;
Heard not sighs, with fragrance laden
From the rosy bowers, and myrtles.
With a sense of doom foreboding,
Sadly they beheld the wondrous
Perfumed bowers, where lay reposing
Heaven's high God of Love's sweet ardour,
Eros ; who on this fair island
Deigned to tarry in our image ;
While all things his presence feeling
Were rejoiced, and could not wither.

Ah, behold ! No longer Psyche
There in fragrant bower is resting.
While the veil of darkness shrouded

Rose the princess softly, shyly.
While around all seemed enraptured
With the sacred breath of Eros,
From those mobile lips outbreathing.
Half reclining, limbs outstretching
From her bower, was Psyche gliding.
Suddenly, with startling quickness,
Then she stood upright, and list'ning !
And the darkness seemed enchanted,
Whispering softly, gently warning :—
“ Psyche ! Psyche ! Psyche ! Psyche ! ”

And the chiton seemed to tremble
On that body graceful, tender,
Lily-white, with tints of roses,
With a sheen like wave-crest foaming.
Long she stood there, hesitating,
Anxiously perplexed and troubled :
And the sweat-beads on her forehead
Soon appeared, like small pearls, shining.
Psyche ! Heardst thou not his breathing
Restful, as the waves on ocean
Quiet ? Heardst thou not that subtle
Magic, wondrous, sweetest singing
With its undertone of sadness,
Death-like, weird, mysterious moaning ?
How it sounded, each time softer,
Like a sad faint suspiration :—
“ Psyche ! Psyche ! Psyche ! Psyche ! ” ?

But alas ! More urgent longing
Grew within the heart of Psyche :
Impious wish to see his beauty,
Glory of her spouse beloved,
And already, in her fancy,
She beheld his form illumined,

Like her own but far more glorious,
Nobler, grander, and diviner.
Then she bent her lovely body,
To the secret place of hiding,
For her lamp beneath the roses.
And it seemed as if they also
Fain would give another warning,
For she felt the sharp thorn's wounding
In the darkness, strange and lonely :
And the blood ran down her finger.
Quick the sharp pain overcoming,
And with daring still more impious,
Psyche sought the lamp—and found it.
Quick the burning wick then trimming,
Once again she stood in darkness.
Look ! With sudden treacherous gleaming
Upward shot, with vivid brightness,
That strange flame, the bower disclosing
For how brief, how sad a moment !
Psyche stood transfixed, elated,
By the glorious heavenly vision ;
In an ecstasy of wonder
And a wild intoxication,
Joy-delirious, soul-consuming.
There she stood, poor lovely Psyche,
At the side of her belovèd ;
In her left hand firmly holding
Up on high the lamp revealing.
Thus she saw the mighty Eros
In his wondrous earthly beauty.

Gently there upon the pillow
Lay the head of golden radiance,
Bathed in fragrance of ambrosia
And in nectar's subtle perfume.
And the glorious limbs and body

Seemed as if with light pulsating,
 Like the shimmering flash from dew-drops.
 And the smiling lips, half parted,
 Overmatched the rose's beauty ;
 While the eyelids' long dark lashes
 Seemed like veils to hide the wondrous
 Magic glow of eyes, whose power
 Earth-born mortal dare not witness.
 On that countenance irradiant,
 Played a smile like lambent flaming ;
 And a subtle melancholy,
 Such as Gods alone, whose prescience
 Comprehends the joy and sadness
 Of the ages of the ages,
 Know and feel. In peace and sleeping,
 Ah ! how cosy, happy, gracious
 Seem'd the great God's wondrous presence !
 Ah ! how swift the moments flying
 Passed away, as if awaking
 From its slumber, it lamenting
 Went the realms of non-existence,
 In reluctance sadly sighing.

But as flames of glowing furnace
 Leap above their fiery prison,
 So a fierce tumultuous longing
 Burst forth then in Psyche's bosom.
 Overwhelmed in thought and feeling,
 Only one idea possessed her,
 Coruscating, soul-inflaming,
 " Thou art mine, O spouse belovèd :
 I am thine : and thus united
 We are one : Belovèd, nameless ! "
 Psyche in her sudden transport,
 Stamm'ring thus her heart's wild feelings,
 Sank before her spouse's pillow

In her spirit's glow o'erwhelmèd ;
Giving wild and stormy kisses,
Kisses such as till this moment
Ne'er possessed such wondrous fervour.

Woe ! Ah, woe ! What cry of anguish
Burst from poor and lovely Psyche !
Cry of soul in stress of terror.

From the sculptured lamp had fallen
Drops of glowing oil, that burning
Fell on Eros' naked shoulder,
Wounding him, and quick awakening.
And the God, with stern demeanour,
Rose at once from off his pillow ;
While the lamp's flame palely gleaming
Died before those stern eyes shining.
And poor Psyche, swathed in darkness,
On the surface strewn with rose-blooms,
Clasped her spouse's knees in anguish,
Firmly clinging, loudly sobbing.

“ Woe ! oh, woe is me, belovèd !
Oh, forgive my foolish longing
That my love has falsely prompted.
O my spouse, beloved ! punish
As thou wilt, my vain and wicked
Wish to see thy form and image.
Oh, that I had never yielded
To those faithless evil promptings,
Impulse mine own soul ne'er wakened !
All things will I gladly suffer :
I will bear thy sternest anger :
But oh, do not rob me ever
Of thy heart's love, O belovèd !
Leave me this, my Life, my loved one.”

Sadly Psyche felt her clinging
Desperate was in vain ; for Eros'
Glorious form was fast dissolving ;
And he vanished in the darkness.
Psyche heard his voice commanding,
Yet so tender and caressing,
Far away in distance dying.
And a great and dreadful silence,
Cold, despairing, hopeless, awful,
Seemed to swathe her humbled spirit.

Thus she heard the heavy-hearted
Words that through her soul resounded :—
“ Ah, poor Psyche, as a lost one
Must I leave thee, sad, forsaken ;
And for me, too, all our dreaming
Now has vanished ; all that highest
Everlasting glow of feeling ;
All divine ecstatic transports
Filling every hour with rapture.
And that future hour of gladness,
When, by purest love transformèd,
Out of our sweet darkness, Psyche,
Had been raised that day of rapture
When in all my radiant glory
Thou hadst seen me :—

Ah, my Psyche !

Not as yet is thy dear being
Wholly filled with Eros' image ;
For thy fondest words caressing
Ever were with Self beguilèd.
Self wert thou, and self, alone.
Fare thee well, unhappy Psyche,
Here below we shall not ever
Meet.”—

'Twas thus, when disappearing,
Eros spake; the stern, majestic
Love-God of the Highest Heaven.
" Ah, poor Psyche ! " said great Eros,
" Who like thee, great Love is seeking,
Cannot truly ever find it ;
Cannot know that high adoring,
That alone with richest blessing
Fills the heart with fullest rapture."

With a cry of heart in anguish,
Wretched, weeping, praying, hopeless,
Psyche in her bower collapsing
Heard the voice in distance dying ;
Till she felt the death-like horror,
Cold, despairing, starless, dreadful,
Of the great and awful Silence.
Then poor Psyche, weak and fainting,
Sank in swoon ; still radiant, lovely,
In her magic flower-like beauty.
And though Eros' self had vanished,
Still remained his shining image
In her heart and memory buried.
" Oh, my life ! my soul ! Belovèd !
Can I e'er forget thee, leave thee ?
Ah, without thy gracious presence
Life to me than death is paler,
Hopeless, wretched, sad, despairing."
Thus spake Psyche, in her weeping :—

" Ah ! thou art—my heaven's Eros,
God of Love—my spouse belovèd.
I will seek thee, seek thee ever
Till I find thee : yes, and finding
I will strive thy love to conquer ;
Yes, to win thy heart, great Eros ;

Till thy great and gracious mercy
 And compassion shall not fail me ;
 Till I win thy love and pardon.
 One more glance, O my beloved !
 Of thy tender eyes and loving,
 One more touch with thrill of rapture
 Of thy lips, O glorious Eros !
 Ah ! and then ? Ah, then I'd gladly
 Sink upon the shore of Hades,
 Where the pale shades ever wander ;
 There I'd yield me, and with rapture
 In my heart, would keep that mem'ry
 Ever in my vision ; ever."

Sad-perplexed, despairing, frantic,
 Psyche's heart was wildly beating,
 As she rose up from her swooning ;
 Rose to see, with strange foreboding,
 Once again, a wondrous marvel.

Slowly bent the flower-laden
 Stems, that graced the sculptured columns
 Of the holy magic temple ;
 And the countless fragrant roses
 Hung their heads in dreary sadness,
 All their rosy colours changing
 To a sickly white ; then dying.
 And, ah, crowning great disaster !
 Into ruins fell the temple,
 And their happy place of slumber ;
 All then plung'd, with frightful shudder,
 In the dark abyss, that opened
 Suddenly before her :—

Psyche,
 Anguished, cried aloud to Eros :—
 " Shall I hence, O great beloved,

Shall I hence, to seek thee, Eros? ”
Thus spake Psyche :—

And despairing
Then she thought, with head inclinèd,
Swift to plunge in that dark chasm.
Scarcely had this resolution
Formed itself, when she, astonish'd,
Saw that every trace had vanished
Of the dread and yawning chasm.

With a cold unfriendly dawning,
Light and lighter grew the Orient.
How the glories of the island
Disappeared or sadly faded !
Hastening then along the pathway,
Psyche called the snow-white cygnets,
Spotless as the flowers of lilies.
And they came and formed a pathway
O'er which Psyche then departed
From that radiant little island,
With its oxymel commingling
Of great rapture, ah ! and sorrow.
And their clear eyes, glancing friendly,
Seemed oppressed with sad forebodings
Psyche sighed :—And on the margin
Of the lake, thus spake she, weeping :—
“ Ah, perhaps in gloom of forest
I shall find my spouse's footsteps.
O my husband ! O my Eros !
All that I can do or suffer
Will I do or bear in silence.
But, O Eros ! let me ever,
Though unseeing, suffer always
By thy glorious eyes beholden.”
And the light transparent chiton

Scarcely hid her rosy body
As she eager, swiftly wandered
In the glades' mysterious darkness—
Glades of myrtles, olives, laurels—
Where she heard, enchanted, singing.
As she wandered, came remembrance
Of another voice and singing.
Fearful, sad, astonished, yearning,
Psyche stood there, pensive, weeping;
As she saw the transformation,
Strange, unhappy, dread, foreboding.
For the swans, and fairest lilies
Sang their last great Hymenæus;
But the tones of jubilation
All had vanished; and its under-
Tones were weeping, sad, and dirge-like.
Slowly then beneath the wavelets,
As the sounds despairing ended,
Sank the swans and snowy lilies
Into watery graves and darkness.
Psyche then looked toward the island
Full of mem'ries sad and happy;
And behold! 'Twas disappearing!
From the depths a strange dark foaming
Seemed to spring with sounds of groaning;
And a dark and brooding silence
Followed; like a pall funereal
Spreading o'er the foaming billows.
And this flood of noisome foaming,
Hopeless, weird, despairing, stygian,
Quickly spread o'er Psyche's island.
All looked strange, unreal and ghastly,
As the noisome deadly vapours
Veiled all things in murky darkness.
By the strange black mists surrounded
Psyche thought she saw the mocking

Sneering faces of ill-creatures.
And though Psyche, torn with anguish,
Wept despairing ; yet the image
Of her Eros, shrined within her
Heart and being, never left her.
Through the forest, with an anguished
Cry she plunged, now calling sadly :—
“ O my spouse, my well-belovèd !
O great Eros ! shew me mercy.”

But the Echo only answered
Mockingly her cry, despairing.
“ Where, oh, tell me where to seek him.”
Psyche asked the trees and flowers ;
Asked the birds, the stones, the waters,
Brooks ; the air and cloudland distant.
But the dark gloom of the forest
Gave her back the Echo-answer :—
“ Where to seek him ? Seek him : seek him.”

PART II

CHAPTER VI

PSYCHE'S PILGRIMAGE

AND she wandered forth to seek him,
Over plain and meadows flowering,
With the image fair, belovèd,
Of her Eros, ever present.
Tireless, proof against all trouble,
Caring nought for thirst or hunger,
Cold or heat, or for the thousand
Ills that come in shapes protean
Ever since the great beginning,
Psyche wandered seeking, seeking.

To her yearning ardent questions
All were silent, tree and flower,
Wind and wave, and spring and brooklet.
Even mossy stony masses
Lichen-covered, grey and stately,
Or grotesque, that knew her greeting
In the days of yore, no longer
Seemed so friendly, but estrangèd.
And she wept there, lonely, silent.
Ah ! a dumb unfriendly feeling
Seemed her inmost self assailing.
Ah ! poor Psyche, all has altered ;
In thy quest thou art forsaken !
When the pall of Night had fallen,

And from out dark depths of æther
Countless stars shone, glitt'ring, restless,
Looking down on her, poor pilgrim,
Psyche saw them coldly mocking.
Yet she never let her courage
Fail her, or the heart within her
Sink in hopeless dark despairing.
Thus at last, when Night had vanished,
Psyche's soul, no longer childlike,
Or like simple flower, had altered.
Bold and brave in poignant suffering,
Was she ; patient, earnest, dauntless.

Ofttimes strangely sad, perplexèd,
Would she yearn for her deliv'rance ;
Though no longer fear assailed her,
When, through wastes and deserts dreary,
Wandered thus the suffering Psyche,
Ardent prayers to heaven sending.
And she stood, with arms extended,
Looking upwards through the æther,
While the tears were flowing gently.
Ah ! alas her lovely chiton
Now was dust-stained, torn, unsightly,
Round the rosy tender body.
For the sunlight, hot and burning,
And the moon's cool shafts mysterious,
Pierced the chiton, her poor body
Cruelly wounding.—

And when later—
One fair morning flecks in cloudland
Shimmered roseate in the Orient ;
And the wan moon, pale and death-like,
Seemed suspended in the æther,
Cold and grey and almost toneless ;

Psyche reached the forest's margin,
Where she saw a plain outstretching,
Richly decked with loveliest flow'rets.
And she stood ; heart-glad, astonished.
There, beneath the foliage-shadows
Of a branching fragrant cedar,
Psyche saw a woman sitting
Lost in Dreamland, sadly pining ;
Bending o'er a marble coffin,
With its sombre black, forbidding.
From the dark eyes, wet with weeping,
Shone a smile of chastened courage.
And the mourner ? Was she youthful ?
Ah ! As Psyche sympathetic
Quick approached, she saw more clearly
But a woman, old and silent,
Sitting mourning. In her tresses
Snowy-white, the dew-drops glittered ;
Brilliant gems—the gift of heaven
That had fallen from the leaflets
Of the cedar boughs, wind-shaken
In the freshness of the morning.

Thus, amazed, the suffering Psyche
Saw the mourner by her coffin.
And the latter, seeing Psyche—
Hapless, sorrow-stricken maiden—
Spake thus, in sweet accents gentle :—

“ Wand'ring child ! whom Love's sharp arrow
Ne'er has unsuspecting wounded,
Hast thou also come with laughter
At my sorrow and my folly,
At that sweet and peaceful madness
As th' unfeeling cold world calls it ?
See ! here rests my well-belovèd

Ah ! in Death's eternal slumber ;
Taken from me all too early
By a Fate, relentless, cruel.
He who rested in the darkness,
Ever near me, now has vanished !
See his face ! How brave and smiling !
I shall ever wait here with him
Till the Goddess call me also
To the strange pale world of Hades ;
Where again in fields Elysian
Of the shadow-land, united,
We shall gladly roam for ever.
Ah ! thou wandering little maiden,
When I gaze on this dear, peaceful,
Noble countenance illumined,
Then again arise within me
All the glowing recollections
Of our youth, and hours of blessing."

Then poor Psyche, in her weeping
Cried aloud :—" Oh, love, how faithful !
Do the Gods then, shew no mercy ?
Is no pity in their bosoms ?
Ah, thou dear one, faithful, worthy !
Would my heart e'en like to thine were,
Fitting home for Heaven's great Eros ! '

And the broken-hearted mourner
Heard her words with silent wonder.
" Ah, and hast thou also suffered ? "
Thought she, with despairing gesture,
" Or, perhaps the Gods have robbed thee
Of the sacred light of reason."

And poor Psyche, in her sorrow
Round her neck the mourner clasping,

Sobbed aloud :—" Oh, how unfaithful,
How unthankful, and ungracious
Have I been to my belovèd !
He who, though a God immortal,
To my frail and mortal being
Condescended, took the earth-born
Psyche as his spouse, belovèd."

" Psyche ? " cried the pious mourner,
Whose dear heart was ever youthful.
" Thou the ruthless lovely Psyche ?
Ah, depart ! Let not thy presence
E'er profane the place of sacred
And unchanging recollection
Of true Love's undying blisses."

And with tears, then questioned Psyche,
" Hast thou then no word of counsel,
Where or whither I may seek him ?
How atone for all my failing ?
How his gracious heart solicit,
And again win his affection ? "
But the mourner grey was silent.
She whose heart was ever youthful.
And she smiled in happy sadness
Underneath the cedar's shadows
By the sombre marble coffin.

Deeply sadden'd, Psyche hastened
Onward in her path of yearning,
As if all things now were darker.
Yet despair she banished ever,
And her quest continued bravely.
Then she sought to learn if haply,
In the haunts of fellow mortals,

She might find the slightest traces
Of her well-belovèd's presence.

O'er the meadows, in the distance,
She could see a mighty city
With its towers towards heaven ascending,
And its splendid marble columns.
Then with quickened steps, she hastened
Feeling not a trace of languor,
Toward it, till she reach'd a roadway
By the plane-trees overshadowed :
At its side a brooklet rippling.

And the plane-trees' grateful shadows
Led her onward to a temple
Standing in a grove of laurels.
Heartened, brave, with ardent longing,
Then she entered in its precincts,
With their grave mysterious darkness.
And she hoped that she might haply
Hear of Eros' sacred presence ;
And with tears of deep repentance
Make atonement for her doubting,
Faithless, impious and ungrateful.

Darker and darker, ever darker,
Grew the stern brow of the Seer ;
As when, in the heavens approaching,
Comes the storm, with vivid menace,
As on high with clouds of thunder
Ride the Gods in strangest chariots.
Darker still, and ever darker
Grew the stern brow of the Seer,
Till he called the temple servants.
Who, when dumbly signalled, led her,
Led the unsuspecting Psyche

Towards the Agora of the city.
And despite the midday glowing
Of the sun, there were already
Multitudes of men and women,
Croaking, hastening towards the market,
Like a host of birds of plunder,
With strange voices shrilly crying ;
While the women loudly shrieking
Added to the noise and tumult.

Let the impious God-denier,
Let the cold unfaithful Psyche
Now unto our God be offered,
That his anger be appeasèd ;
Thus may he regard us guiltless,
Such mistrust, and deeds, abhorring.

Like the wild sea's stormy billows,
Surged the crowds in blood-lust madness.
But poor Psyche, sadly smiling,
Heart-perplexed, then whispered fearless :—
“ Gladly, gladly will I suffer ;
Gladly die, his heart to soften ;
Gladly thus atone mine error.”

Sad and gloomy hymns resounded
From that strange grey cruel priesthood,
Clad in long white robes and flowing,
While they walked in high procession
As in festal march, with Psyche.
And the crowd with mad impatience
Surged and pressed, with wild commotion.

And this white-clad host, proceeding
Through a waste of plain forsaken,
Reached at last a little hillock
Where a gruesome wooden structure

Shewed the death prepared for Psyche.
Ah ! poor Psyche, why not weeping
At the sight of martyr-burning ?
Why art thou not all-despairing
At this lowest ignominy,
At this death of anguished horror ;
Basest of all earthly death-doom,
And for thee, for thee preparèd ?

“ All, oh ! all I'll gladly suffer
To the end in patient silence,
If I may, my spouse beholding,
Once more see his loved face, smiling.”
Thus poor Psyche's patient spirit
Spake ; her dark bright eyes illumined,
Quiet and composed, and seeming
Like a lamb, in evil presence
Of a pack of fierce wolves, raging
In their blood-lust ; quick approaching
Near and nearer to their victim.

Psyche's garments now were graspèd
By rough hands, unfeeling, cruel,
With intent of execution,
But that moment sudden darkness
Overwhelmed them with its horror,
As if plunged in Night appalling.
And the lightning and the thunder
Flashed and rolled with awful menace ;
While the cloud gusts, howling wildly,
Poured their heavy drenching burden ;
Till it seemed as if in Chaos
Once again the world was plungèd.

Down upon the earth's wet flooring
Sank poor Psyche, weak and fainting,

In the place of martyrs lying,
 When at last from death-like slumber
 She awakened, cold and shudd'ring,
 With the dew-drops on her forehead,
 And her lovely limbs half-frozen,
 Her bewildered spirit questioned :—
 " Was this all but evil dreaming ? "

In the moonbeams cold and fitful
 Gleaming, Psyche wander'd sadly
 Through the midst of forest lonely ;
 Where the mountain-cliffs o'erhanging
 Seemed to frown with glance unfriendly.
 And poor Psyche's tears were flowing
 In this strange land's desolation ;
 And her soul's torment and anguish
 Was reflected in the darkness
 Of the sombre mountain forest ;
 And her sadness was reëchoed
 By the dim and misty valleys.

" Woe ! Throughout the earth I've wandered,
 As a sad and restless pilgrim,
 Ever seeking my belovèd ;
 Seeking trace of Heaven's great Eros ;
 That perchance his love and mercy
 I should win by patient suff'ring.
 Ah ! alas, where shall I seek him ? "

" Seek him, seek him ! " rang the Echo
 With its counsel from the darkness.
 Then from out the dark pine branches
 Rush'd a grey form, wolf-like, ravening,
 Leaping madly in its fury
 As it growling rushed at Psyche.
 From those fierce eyes, full of blood-lust,

Swiftly fled the trembling Psyche,
While above her head were flying
Ravens, vultures, cawing, shrieking,
By their numbers dark'ning heaven.

Near and nearer, close behind her,
Psyche felt the monster gloating.
Hot and hotter was his breathing,
When a dark abyss appearing,
Yawned before her ; deep, unfathomed.
And no deer in fleetest running
E'er could leap across the chasm.
Near, and nearer still towards Psyche
Came that hideous wolf-like monster,
With its hot envenom'd breathing.

" Woe is me !" cried suff'ring Psyche,
And her dark eyes flashed, illumined
By a light of vivid radiance.

" Can it be that that sweet image,
Image of my well-belovèd,
E'er is held in that dark region—
Black as Night—the realms of Hades ?
Dost thou ne'er in plain or mountain
On the wide earth ever tarry,
Whence with heart and eye repellent,
They have thrust, with rude repulsive
Hands, thy broken-hearted Psyche ? "

Then her fair white arms outstretching,
Seeming almost like to pinions
Spread for flight, poor troubled Psyche
Plunged without a fear or shudder
In the abyss of blackest darkness.

CHAPTER VII

IN THE DEPTHS

WHEN from out the sombre cloudland
Of her patient suff'ring spirit
Psyche woke, there stretched before her
Strangely pale, a meadow, covered
With the Asphodel's fair flowers.
Sadly o'er its wide expanses
Shone a sun, but palely gleaming
With the moon's faint lily-whiteness,
Ah ! the sad faint light of Hades.

Psyche saw, with anguished horror,
That each pale-white silvery blossom,
And its stems ne'er cast a shadow ;
But from out each ghost-like chalice
Rose a subtle perfumed breathing,
Like a misty form, and waving
To her, ever faintly whisp'ring :—
“ Ah ! with us, thou lovely Psyche,
Stay for ever, gently swaying ;
Happy, all the past forgetting,
Pain and sorrow, light and darkness,
Every vain and earthly mem'ry.”

Smiling sadly, Psyche answered :—
“ Mem'ries all, of joy and sorrow
And of sunny shapes, of colour,
Will I gladly ever bury
In the depths of Past forgotten.
But the mem'ry of his image,
Of his love ; the wondrous rapture
Of his presence ? Ah no ! never,

Never, shall such happy mem'ries
Fade away from Psyche's being."

And as from her pale lips, moving
Came these words, with love impassioned ;
Answering to the subtle whispers
Of the asphodel's white blossoms ;
All the pale procession vanished ;
And a strange mysterious silence,
Like a cold funereal garment,
Seemed to overwhelm the flowers,
Ghastly-pale, and sadly sighing.

Onward passed the lovely Psyche
Through the shadow-world of Hades ;
Through the cold and sombre portals
Of dark Death ; and in the distance
She could hear the wavelets plashing,
Of the weird and troubled waters.
In the reeds she saw a shallop
Rocked by waves, and grey and fragile.

Psyche quickly then decided,
As she loosed the fragile shallop,
Now to cross the gloomy river.
Taking then the oar, she plied it
Till she reached the side opposing,
From the river darkly flowing
As she crossed the murky waters
Many a pale face, in the silence,
Glanced at her from out the waters.
Psyche then, with boldest courage
Held aloft her golden tresses,
Speaking thus :—

“ Oh ! where is Eros,
He who leaves me to my penance ? ”
Sighing deep, they vanished strangely

In the dark and sombre waters.
When at last across the river
She had reached her destination ;
From the dark dense leafy shadows
Of the gloomy world's strange foliage,
Came a wind that stronger whispered :—
“ Stay with us,” it murmured, “ Psyche !
Only in this land of shadows
Can the human heart find healing ;
This pale phantom land of Hades !
Here the wicked cease from troubling ;
Here the weary rest for ever.
Ne'er again that poignant suffering
Of the world of light, deceitful,
Shall o'ertake thee, wring and torture.
Stay with us, thou lovely Psyche ;
Here alone is peace of spirit !
Wilt thou ? For no wretched shadow
E'er shall mar thy gracious presence !
It is easy, lovely Psyche,
Now, to cast away for ever
All things from thy troubled mem'ry,
And to find surcease of sorrow.
Ah ! that thou wouldst drink that water,
Rippling in the magic streamlet !
See it sparkling, glancing at thee !
Wander toward it, child, then drink it.
One small drop ! And then oblivion
Of the past, its pangs, its sorrows !
Then thou'rt ours ! And ah ! what raptures
Shall await thee, then, O Psyche !
Where the glitt'ring silver pavement
Marks the home of spirits blessèd.
There beyond that distant river
Where in waters blue and emerald
Float those white swans, gaily swimming ! ”

“ O my spouse ! Belovèd Eros ! ”
Sighed poor Psyche, in her yearning ;—
“ By mine own tears, overwhelmèd,
Let me at thy feet, and dying,
See e’en once the light and mercy
Of thine eyes, their gracious kindness ;
But one glance of Love’s own radiance
Telling me of gracious pardon.”

And the white swans gaily floating
Brought her echo-recollection
Of the dear enchanted island.
Psyche’s tears afresh were flowing,
Like great pearls, from out the violet-
Tinted eyes ; and with her weeping
Once again hope germinated.
How upon the wings of fancy
Hovered then poor lovely Psyche !
Till again she saw the waters
Bubbling in the dark green shadows
Of the cypress on the island ;
But without its glow and colour,
And around she saw the jasmine ;
With its white and fragrant blossoms
Interlacing with the poppies ;
Red and numberless and dream-like ;
To each gust so strangely bending.

And the patient soul-stressed Psyche
Wandered towards the waters magic ;
While a voice, in guise of Eros’,
From the empty space spake to her.
Ah ! what dark mysterious wonder !
’Twas a subtle pale reflexion
Of those tones, that in the island
Gave her such bewildering rapture—

Whispered aftermath of kisses—
Words caressing, clear and gentle,
Hot with passion, love inflaming,
Whispers of the night ecstatic,
In the fragrance of the darkness !
And the voice said, subtly pleading :—

“ Ah ! thou poor and lovely Psyche !
All thy sorrows, all thy torments,
All the horror and the anguish
Of thine earthly life, are ended ;
And like dreams have gone for ever.
Bend thee down then, tortured Psyche ;
In thy right hand take the blessèd
Magic waters of oblivion ;
But one drop then quickly drinking
And thy heart's pulse, fresher stirring,
E'er will give a newer, sweeter,
Happier life of self-forgetting ;
And this life will clothe thy spirit
As a blossom friendly, smiling,
Like a magic garment, folding
All thy deepest thoughts and feelings
Far away from mem'ries' torments.
Wouldst thou live unchanged, for ever
Free from all the pangs of suffering,
From all anguish, doubt, despairing,
And from—worst of earthly blessings—
Great Love's first and ardent glowing ? ”

“ Ah ! I will not fly my sorrow,”
Psyche answered, wildly sobbing,
If, again my loved one seeing,
I may kneel once more before him ;
Ah ! and then in highest rapture

Once again behold the radiance
Of his eyes, and see their flaming.
I will die entranced, enraptured
By Love's mad intoxication."

Psyche unconsolated, departed
From the Lethe-spring, Oblivion.
Yet it was her sole and earnest
Wish, her sweetest pain and pleasure,
E'er to seek, desire to strive for
That unending self-forgetting ;
That which choir of spirit voices
In that strange, pale land of shadows
Had not sought, but had attained.

Through the chasms, wild and rocky,
Where the rush of foaming waters
Showed their restless silv'ry gleaming,
Wander'd Psyche ; while from cloudland
With its paleness, strange and gruesome,
Streamed the rays of white, descending.

To the awful realms of torture
Of the damned, at last came Psyche ;
And she hastened through the dreary
Dark abodes of woe unending.
But a strange and rarest marvel !
Naught her eyes saw, of the torments,
Horrible, beyond all telling.
She perceived but sighings, groanings,
Anguished plaints and shrieks of horror.
Sometimes, too, a loud, exulting,
Mocking demon-laughter sound ;
Ah ! in tones that seemed as soaring
Far above the frightful anguish—
With its awful, ghastly meaning—

There, inflicted by tormentors.
All these cries, and fearful moanings,
And the countless plaints and sobbings
Of the damned in Hades' prisons,
Seemed in Psyche's bosom, merely
Echo of her own love-anguish.

Onward, through the chasms gruesome
Of the realms of shadow-being.
Hastened Psyche; still retaining
Her bright star of hope, unchanged.
After many days of wandering,
Psyche stood before a river
Gently flowing, azure-tinted.
As she stood astounded, happy,
Came a sense of exultation.
Was that land with sunlight brilliant,
Fair as paradise in blossom,
Not th' enchanted realms of Eros?
Through the fragrant bowers of myrtle,
Sunbeams played in radiant flashes,
Green and golden, as if linked
Hand in hand; and gaily swaying
Their white garb as if betrothèd.

Ah! who was the glorious dreamer,
Resting there upon a moss-grown
Rocky mound, in densest shadow
Of the perfumed bowers of myrtle;
While around in sweet confusion
Lay the countless fragrant petals
Of the rose-trees' perfect blossoms?
Psyche saw the noble figure,
O'er whose neck the locks of golden
Hair;—and subtle intuition
Whispered to her one name only!

“ O my heavenly spouse ! My Eros ! ”
Cried she, weeping and transported.
But the dreamer, on the moss-grown
Rocks, remained there, still reflecting ;
Gazing at the rose’s petals.
Scarcely had her cry of rapture
And a bitter pain, escaped her,
When the white-winged swans, appearing
On the blue and quiet river,
Quickly swimming, came towards Psyche,
With their greetings hearty, friendly,
Shining in their clear eyes, peaceful.

“ Make again the living pathway
To my heavenly spouse, to Eros,”
Then said Psyche, urgent, eager.
“ Know you not your Psyche longer ?
Ah ! my friends of that fair island ! ”

But the white swans, Psyche hearing,
Turned their heads and slowly, sadly,
Drew away. With heart enraptured
At the sight of her belovèd,
In the shadow of the myrtles,
But alas ! not looking towards her,
Psyche cried out :—

“ O my Eros !
Fearless, undismayed, ah, gladly,
Will I plunge in these blue waters ;
If thou wilt, O my belovèd,
Ne’er permit those evil spirits—
That would ever tear me from thee—
Strong faith in thee to diminish.
But have mercy, O belovèd !

And forgiveness, O sweet Eros ! ”
This she cried in anguished rapture ;
All the soul within her pleading ;
She, who in her path of suffering,
Wand’ring as a patient pilgrim,
Had endured such stress and trial,
That a thousand thousand anguished
Human lives could not exceed them.

Not a single thought possessing
Her of self, and seeing only
That one image, ne’er forgotten,
Radiant image of her Eros,
God of Love, and her belovèd ;
Psyche then, without a shudder,
Plunged into the billowy river ;
With the happy expectation
Of a rapturous swift reunion
With her Eros. But no Naiad,
Neither sea-nymph, nor Nereid,
In their crafty, happy playing,
Let the poor despairing Psyche
Down to their own crystal grottoes.

But the swans closed round her gently,
Slowly then, their lovely burden,
Bearing further from the island,
From its happy fields and bowers.

“ Woe ! Ah, woe is me ! ” cried Psyche,
As the fragrant magic island
Disappeared in hazy distance,
Where the waves and sky together
Met, and merged in fairest colours.
And she felt herself borne onward

O'er the wide, wide sea ; till darkness
Came, and swooning ; heart and spirit
All enwrapped in sweet oblivion.

CHAPTER VIII

IN THE HEIGHTS

WITH impassioned ardent longing,
Suff'ring, patient, lovely Psyche
Wandered in the rosy sunlight,
Warm and grateful, gleaming brightly.
And although her poignant torments
Towered high in mem'ry's vista,
Yet the more they rose before her
So her hope grew brighter, greater ;
And she felt her Eros near her.
And this happy sweet illusion
Led her onward still, and upward.
In the warm and friendly sunshine,
From the simple star-like flowers,
From the streamlet and the forest,
Subtle voices reached her, whisp'ring ;
Ever whisp'ring of her Eros.
And she heard, in tones caressing,
Gentle words of sweetest comfort.

“ Ah ! my poor and lovely Psyche,
Soon in perfect happy union
Shalt thou rest, for Eros worthy ;
Rest beside thy spouse belovèd ;
Nevermore as earthly dear one,
But as Goddess-Spouse for ever.
Thou no more to fleeting pleasures,

Nor to raptures unenduring,
Shalt be prisoned, patient Psyche.
Thou shalt taste, too, sacred sorrows;
And shalt bear, with greater gladness,
Pain that wrings the heart of Godhead,
With a stress that none may measure."

Thus already intuition
Of deliv'rance came to Psyche.
Like a flow'ret gently opening
She had felt the consummation
Of her pilgrimage was nearing;
That her path of earthly sorrow
Soon must be for ever ended.
And she knew that her belovèd,
Though unseen, was ever near her :
Thus in joyous hope she wandered
To the end, with heart of gladness.

Lucent, with a dewy brilliance,
Oh ! what magic love-lit radiance
Now from out the eyes of Psyche,
Shone ; a heavenly glow, mysterious,
Silent ; yet of wonders telling,
Such as eyes like stars or flowers,
Never spake ; a glory, shining
From the dream-soul's mystic visions.
And her voice ! How sweet, expressive,
Tender, true, caressing, suasive ;
With an echo of all music's
Richest tones and sweetest cadence !
So that one who saw th' effulgence
Of those eyes, or heard the music
Of that voice, would, joy-transported,
Ne'er believe a fragile mortal
Stood before him ; but a Goddess,

Aye, a sister e'en of Eros.
Oh ! what pain-illumin'd glory
Shone around her death-rich body,
Like the silver flashing radiant
Garment of seraphic beauty !
Ah ! and lighter, ever lighter
Seem'd the pain, the torment, trouble,
As she wandered in her chiton,
Dusty now, and torn and faded ;
As if mocking all the glory
That adorned that lovely presence.

As she wandered one bright morning,
Psyche saw a steep, projecting
From the side of rugged mountain,
To her right and left extending ;
And in hazy distance fading ;
While like disc of blood-red, shimm'ring,
Hung th' empurpled glowing sun-ball.
But she could not find a pathway
To the right or left hand turning.
Could she then, her steps retracing,
Pass again through realms of horror ?
Ah ! she knew what there she witnessed !
There she had not found her Eros.
" Onward then with dauntless courage,"
Gladly urged the inner voices.

And as she the mount ascended
Spring and summer, autumn, winter
Seemed, to Psyche's vision, passing
As she climbed the snowy summit,
Where the rosy sunlight shining
On the silver-gleaming mountain
Seemed as if 'twere friendly beckoning.
Then with blue eyes upwards gazing,

Psyche thought in that bright radiance
She could see her great belovèd ;
Shining, glorious in his splendour !
Ah ! How sweet her new-born yearning !
For no more, with face averted,
Was her Eros, spouse belovèd ;
But he seemed from vastest distance
As if gazing down and smiling ;
While his arms were wide extended
As if swift, with wings expanded,
He would come with mighty sweeping
Of those wings, whose tips now glowing,
Shone with rosy light-irradiance—
Psyche cried, with wildest sobbing
And in rapturous jubilation :—

“ O my Eros ! stay, belovèd ;
I am coming ; disappear not.
Ah ! for now I may declare it,
Not in pride, nor vain self-glory,
But that now I see all clearly,
And I know that I am changèd,
Worthy of my spouse, my Eros ;
O my Eros ! well-belovèd ! ”

Psyche neither knew, nor noted
Days and nights in these strange wand'rings,
Till at last she reached a mountain,
Cold and high, unique in splendour.
And then passed the round of seasons ;
Spring and summer, autumn, winter.
Through the spring's deep forest, ever
Onwards, upwards, walked poor Psyche ;
While the nightingales were singing
Tenderly, hymns hymeneal.

Once alone, she stayed a moment
At a spring for her refreshing.

But, when gazing in the limpid
Water of the spring, reflected
There she saw her image, fancy
Made her see alone her Eros ;
Never once she caught the image
Of herself, like palest lily ;
And the merest shadow-being
Of her former self. O Psyche !
Praised wert thou above all others
For thy heavenly-earthly beauty.
But the mortal now has faded,
Not its faintest trace remaining.

Ne'er again that earthly question
Came before her inner being.
" Will the great beloved Eros,
Will the radiant God of beauty,
Ever see, in this poor spirit,
Trace of his own Psyche's image ?
Shall she e'er in Love's sweet blindness
Clasp him in her arms caressing ? "

And she conquered, too, the kingdoms
Of the Summer and the Autumn.
Now with cold and desolation
Winter overspread the mountain,
All its varied tints enfolding
'Neath his splendid shining raiment.
But with soul of love, entrancèd,
Psyche, this great transformation,
Scarcely noticed ; scarcely seeing
Change from bright Spring's zephyrs, stirring,
To the hard, sharp frosts of Winter.

Splendid, proud, and high-exalted,
In their lovely lonely whiteness,
All the glaciers gave her greeting.

From the crags and precipices,
Towering high o'er great abysses,
From the thund'ring of the waters
As they plunged in foaming masses
On their way in rocky streamlets.
From the snowy crystals, glitt'ring
On the snow-fields, or in falling,
Psyche heard sweet words of welcome.
And from many a rare white flow'ret,
Psyche saw a friendly greeting.
Thus she took new hope and courage.

And the peaks of snow-white mountains,
And their shining slopes and hollows,
Travers'd by abysses frightful,
Near, and ever nearer threat'ning,
Crowded close; and ever closer.
And the rosy feet were wounded
When she came to rocky fastness.
On each side she saw abysses,
Black and yawning; and behind her.
And the way was hard and dang'rous :
Thus she grasped the scanty herbage
Here and there, to keep from falling.
Sudden Psyche seem'd transported
By some wondrous heavenly marvel !

Both her hands on high unlifting,
And erect, expectant, standing,
Psyche saw the Loved-one waiting
On a rock like silver shining.
And his head with locks of auburn

Downwards, toward his Psyche, gazing
Was inclined with gracious gesture.
And his deep blue eyes refulgent
Shone caressingly and smiling.
“ But a hand-breadth’s separation ! ”
Whispered tones of faintest music ;
“ One more step, then my hand grasping,
And thy pilgrimage is over.”
And with shining eyes, expectant,
Psyche then essayed that final
Step ; whose hoped-for consummation
Was reunion with her Eros.
But she suddenly fell backward
On a thicket in the chasm.
And its flowers and stems and leafage
Bore the frail and weak and pallid
Body, for one briefest moment.

And the strange sweet peace of swooning
Like a veil her vision clouded
As she rested, almost hovering,
On the rugged thicket-pillow,
Held aloft in deadly peril.
Thus she did not hear the pinions
In their rushing sweep, as Eros
Swiftly came, and quick awaked her
With caress to life supernal,
Life of new immortal being.
And the high ecstastic raptures,
All her past joys far transcending,
Overcame her, in the darkness
Of her peaceful quiet swooning.

“ O my glorious, lovely Psyche !
Mine own spouse ! ” rang through the fastness
Through the mountains white and gleaming.

“ Now indeed thou hast for ever
Won thy heavenly spouse, thy Eros.
And the radiant perfect beauty
Of thy later life, and wanderings,
Shall be known among the mortals,
Shall be called, in sacred legend,
Psyche's Pilgrimage to Heaven ! ”

PART III
CHAPTER IX

PSYCHE'S FLIGHT TO HEAVEN

GENTLY in his strong arms, bearing
Psyche's tender rosy body,
Eros swept, with mighty pinions,
From the thicket in the chasm
To that highest peak, enswathèd
By a glow of subtle radiance.
And he placed his well-belovèd
On a couch of rarest flow'rets.

Sweet oblivion still was closing
Those blue eyes; and faintest breathing
Issued like a silvery whisper,
From her lips; and like the wavelets
On a quiet peaceful ocean
Rose and fell that tender bosom.

Ah ! Behold the heavenly marvel !
For a rosy mystic glory
From the God irradiated,
Shining round the lovely Psyche.
See ! the much-praised earthly beauty,
Curse and peril of her earth-life,
Like the covering of a jewel,
Rare and infinitely precious,
Has been taken now, for ever.

And that wondrous glory-radiance,
That from Eros shines resplendent,
Now from Psyche's dross-purged body
Glows again, with equal brilliance.
Thus she seems, not mere belovèd
Of a God, and clothed in splendour,
But his like in heart and image,
Thought and feeling, rosy glory :
Glorious Eros' own twin-sister !
" Ah, my Psyche ! " said he gently
In the wonder-tones of glory :—
" Thou art now a heavenly Goddess."
And the rapturous utt'rance sounded,
As it left the lips of Eros,
As the Song of Worlds mysterious.
And he bowed him to the sleeper
As the right hand to the left hand,
Then about her body bending
Whispered words of love and rapture :—
" My belovèd lovely Psyche ! "

And with kiss divine, awakened
Then the blue eyes' radiant glory.

" O my Eros," said she gently,
" Am I now of Heaven, immortal ? "
And her words reëchoed sweetly,
Like the Songs of Worlds harmonious.
Then her arms his neck enfolded
With the raptures of immortals.
And in purest glowing radiance
Of the glorious Light of Heaven,
That we mortals may not witness,
Psyche now beheld The Vision ;
Bliss divine beyond expression !

Soaring then towards highest heaven
Through the blue of inf'nite æther,
Eros sped, with Psyche radiant.
And his great white wings were shining
Like to molten silver glowing
With their margins rosy-coloured.

Poor is language, poor too, colour ;
Poor is marble, alabaster ;
Poor all earthly means and genius ;
And they stand as judged unworthy
E'er to image forth that glory
Now revealed to Psyche's vision,
Or portray that glowing rapture,
Like a flame of adoration.
Only seraph's Polyhymnia
Could suggest, with subtlest veiling,
And by splendid interweaving
Of the tone-world's richest treasures,
All the bliss which happy Psyche
Felt, that high seraphic pleasure
Such as ne'er was known to mortal.

With the God now interfusèd,
Into one complete existence,
Psyche found her fullest being ;
And no Ego-separateness
Bound her liberated spirit.
Through all higher universes
Passed the heavenly flight of Psyche.
Looking down on great Olympus,
From the flight through higher æther,
Once she saw the Gods, enthronèd,
Looking up in friendly greeting.
Now with eyes of clearer vision,
Through her pains and tribulation,

Self, she never wished to follow ;
But alone her well-belovèd.
Thus at last the Gods Olympian
Saw but Eros' self, believing
Psyche was annihilated ;
That alone, remained great Eros,
Gloriously refulgent, gracious ;
And unique among the beings
Of the everlasting Godhead.

Soon there came a sacred legend
From the golden heights Olympian,
Legend full of subtle beauty ;
That proclaims to us, who wander
In this lower earth-illusion,
That by Fate, a child was given
To the God, the heavenly Eros,
And to Psyche his belovèd ;
Whom he took from Earth to Heaven !
And this lovely child hath stirrèd
To their depths e'en hearts of Godhead.
And its name is " Joy," for ever.

And to Youth, eternal, glorious,
Throned in Light, serene and splendid,
Ever bright, irradiant, changeless,
Owe we thanks, for that great legend
Which the bards have sung, of Psyche,
Of her earthly joys and sorrows.
Thus this bard would end his singing
With the name unique in heaven,
Name from Love and Light descended,
Great Eros' and Psyche's daughter,
Name adored in Earth and Heaven ;—
Joy ! Joy ! Joy !

II.—SONGS OF NATURE

I. SONG OF THE WATERFALL

Ἄμφι δὲ σοί, ῥυθμοῖο κατὰ κρότον, ἔνθεον ἵχνος
ῥησσεύσθω Νύμφαις ταῖο δὲ μεθυδρίδων.¹

Alcæus of Messene, *App. Plan.*, 226. Bergk.

WHERE the merry waters leap
At the fall;
Where they swirl and curl, and creep,
Ere, in pulses o'er the steep,
They rush down into the deep,
At the fall;
There are merry happy notes
In that burst of sound, that floats
From the water-maidens' throats
At the fall !

Where the limpid crystal stream
At the fall,
Is no more content to dream,
But must frolic, bound and gleam,
Where Apollo's magic beam,
At the fall,
Lends its glories to the spray;
We can hear a happy lay
Sung by sylph and sprite and fay
At the fall !

¹ About thee, to the beat of the rhythm, let the inspired footsteps of these Water-Nymphs keep dancing.

Hear the waters as they rush
To the fall !
For a moment there is hush ;
Then with green and crimson blush,
How they laugh and leap and gush !
How they call
To each jovial nymph and gay,
In their merry merry play,
As they toss and dance and sway
At the fall !

Oh, ye bounding waters gay
At the fall !
Ye are blithe as happy May ;
And your dalliance, with each fay,
As you sing your elfin lay,
Holds in thrall
By the magic of your tones ;
While the wind yields nought but groans ;
Or wild shrieks, deep sighs and moans
At the fall.

In your thunder, I have heard
At the fall,
Notes of wonder, strange, absurd ;
As asunder, swift as bird
With its plunder, you have spurred—
At the fall—
Each white-beaming shaft of foam,
With its gleaming light, to home
In the teeming pool, where roam,
'Neath the fall,

Strange and curious things in play
At the fall ;
Things that furious are, or gay ;

Things luxurious, sober, grey ;
Things injurious ; that dismay
 At the fall ;
Strangest scapes, that scarce persist
Till their drapes of foam and mist
Seem like shapes at phantom-tryst,
 At the fall ;

Tryst that greets, in calm or storm
 At the fall,
Each complete and ghostly norm
Of the shapes that swift transform—
As it meets each sylph-like form
 At the fall—
Into things of beauty rare
Such as sing in trancèd air,
Songs that cling to mem'ries there,
 Of the fall.

2. THE SURF-WAVES' BOOM

There is sorrow on the sea ; it cannot be quiet.—Jer. xlix, 23.

ON the far-off lonely shore,
How the wild waves break and roar !
Shall mysterious sounds of awe
Thus be heard for evermore ?
 Boom ! Boom ! Boom !
Will its echo, as it tolls,
Ever tell how Sorrow rolls
Its dread burden on our souls ?
 Boom ! Boom ! Boom !

When the Night is strange and still ;
When o'er valley, lake and hill,
Shadow-like, foreboding ill,
 Comes the gloom ;

Then we hear dark spirits say :—
 “ Be no longer blithe and gay,”
 While there comes from distant bay :
 Boom ! Boom ! Boom !

Are these voices sign of dearth,
 On this weary saddened earth,
 Of all things of highest worth,
 Soul of gloom ?
 E'en in conch, from wave-beat shore,
 We can hear the ocean's roar,
 Hear for ever, evermore :—
 Boom ! Boom ! Boom !

We can hear the sound of wave ;
 Hear the hiss of foam, that gave
 Horror to the watery grave
 In the gloom ;
 When on stormy murky night
 Wild winds drove each luckless wight
 And his ship, with reckless might
 To their doom !

Ever, ever, in unrest
 From the Orient to the West !
 Thou dost human souls invest
 With thy gloom ;
 Hope in souls hast thou destroyed ;
 Human hearts with falsehood buoyed ;
 Life with bitterness alloyed :—
 Boom ! Boom ! Boom !

Voice of ocean, horror-borne !
 Echo of all things that mourn !
 Cry of wretched souls, forlorn,
 In their gloom !

Thou shalt ever sadly say
 Even in thy frolic-play
 Till the end of thine own day,
 Boom ! Boom ! Boom !

3. THE WIND

Ἑψίκομον παρὰ τάνδε καθίζεο φωνήεσσιν
 φρίσσουσιν πεύκην κλώνας ἐπὶ Ζεφύροις.¹

Plato? *App. Plan.*, 13.

HARK ! The wind is softly sighing,
 In the pine-clad range !
 Now it sounds like air-sprites dying ;
 Now like serpent's hiss defying ;
 Now like fearsome demon lying
 As a prisoned spirit, crying,
 In cadenzas strange.

List ! Its tones are rising, falling,
 In the forest drear ;
 As if to the dryads calling,
 With caress of voice entralling ;
 Or with shrieks of rage appalling,
 Ever calling, calling, calling,
 To the dryads near.

Hear the woeful shriek and howling,
 All the eerie groans ;
 As if demon-phantoms prowling
 In the unseen world, were growling,

¹ Sit down beside this sounding pine with lofty foliage, rustling her branches beneath the western winds.

Plato? See Bergk., *Lyr. Græc.*, ii. 307.

ECHOES OF HELLAS

Or with frenzied rage were scowling ;
And were calling, shrieking, howling,
In despairing tones.

Hear the crooning—unavailing—
Call of naiads shy ;
Ever great Pan's death bewailing,
Each her face in sorrow veiling ;
E'er imploring, calling, wailing ;
For they know, his music failing, -
They, alas, must die !

Let not ever tones of sadness,
Songs of dark despair,
Tell us that Creation's badness
Echoes, in our sorrow-madness ;
That thy song is but of sadness ;
That for notes of buoyant gladness
Thou canst never care.

Sing, O Winds, a happier measure ;
Let diviner song
Fill all moments of thy leisure ;
Let it be a joyous measure
Giving souls some poignant pleasure,
Oh, bestow that richer treasure ;—
Happy life, and long !

4. TO ECHO !

Πάν φέλη . . . Ἡχώ γὰρ ὁῦν τοῖσιν ἐνὶ θειωπεδοῖς.¹
 Comatas, *Anth. Pal.*, ix. 586.

ECHO ! nymph ærial,
 Hidden from our eyes !
 Thou with voice æthereal
 Callest from the skies,
 When the crash of thunders
 Tells by mighty sound
 Something of the wonders
 That in Heav'n are found.

Tell me why thou callest,
 Sprite of thinnest air ;
 Now from forest tallest ;
 Now from rocky lair ;
 Now with sudden answer ;
 Now in fainting tones ;
 Tripping now, like dancer ;
 Now like thing that moans !

Ev'ry mountain fastness,
 Fairy-dell and glen,
 Himálaya's mighty vastness,
 Ev'ry fell and fen,
 Seems to know thy presence,
 Thou ærial sprite
 Of such subtle essence ;
 Mocking phantom light !

Where each Alpine glory,
 Icy, rugged, bold,
 Tells the Snow-Queen's story,
 On the glacier's cold,

¹ Dear Pan . . . for Echo wilt thou find here, in sunny place

ECHOES OF HELLAS

Thou art there, O maiden !
Voiceful though unseen ;
Sometimes laughter-laden,
Or with saddened mien.

List ! for now the flowing
Blast of Alpine horn
Flies o'er white mists glowing
In the light of morn ;
Till thy quick replying,
First so firm and loud,
Seems in distance dying
Like a fading cloud.

Art thou only playing,
Sprite in magic shroud !
With our Voices, saying
From the mist and cloud :—
“ See ! e'en Echo calling
Sings, with fairer voice,
Pearl-like notes that falling
Must thine heart rejoice ? ”

Yes, thou nymph evasive !
Here, in rarer air,
Thou can'st be persuasive,
Utt'ring sounds so fair ;
That the sweet notes, calling
To us from afar,
Seem like brilliants falling,
From the Morning Star.

Oh, what subtle beauty
Is there in thy voice !
What delightful duty
'Tis thus to rejoice !

Perfect answer making
In pure liquid notes,
Recollections waking
Of sweet warblers' throats !

But thou'rt naught but mocking ;
For in midnight air
When the demons flocking,
With a ruthless stare,
Whispered to some being
Who all hope had lost :—
“ Quick, from dark Life fleeing,
Soon the River's crossed ; ”

And he, plunging madly,
Told, in one loud cry,
His despair, that sadly
Found no succour nigh ;
Thou, strange nymph, replying
Seemed to mock his pain,
And to say, defying,
“ Ah ! All Life is vain ! ”

.
In a ruin hoary,
Under Egypt's skies,
Whose departed glory
Still is our surprise,
I have heard thy footfall ;—
Strange and eerie groans—
As I walked at nightfall
O'er the sacred stones.

And thy steps were weary
In the shadows deep ;
Where in desert dreary
Egypt's Monarchs sleep ;

ECHOES OF HELLAS

Waiting for the Dawning,
Silent, cold and dumb,
For some fairer morning
That not yet hath come !

Once, in shallop lying
On sequestered lake,
As when Night was dying
Morn commenced to wake
With her fresher breathing ;
I have heard thee there,
As the mists were wreathing
Strange forms in the air,

Each sound reproducing
From the air and sky,
Strangely introducing
E'en thine own weird cry !
Even plash of waters
Thou reflectedst there ;
Laughter of Earth's daughters,
Even whispered pray'r.

Tell me, sprite ærial,
" How canst thou be gay
In thy realms æthereal ?
Is it naught but play ?
Are the unseen glories
But fulfilled desire ?
Fair as childhood's stories
Told by Winter's fire ?

Is your world fantastic ?
Is it splendid, grand ?
Some creation plastic,
Some e'er changing land,

Where each soul rejoices,
And no cause for tears,
Wakes the sadder voices,
Reawakens fears? "

What a quaint delusion,
That thou art a stone !
'Tis but myth-confusion,
That thou canst alone—
Since Narcissus failed thee—
Speak from earthy drape,
For, whoe'er hath hailed thee,
None hath seen thy shape.

To the blithe thou singest
E'er in happy tone ;
To the suff'ring flingest
Back the anguished groan ;
When great Heaven's thunder
Calls from darkened sky,
With an air of wonder
Thou dost quick reply.

Laughter, tears and moaning,
Ringing shout of joy,
Shriek of fear, and groaning,
Merry gay employ,
All attract thee, Echo,
Nymph of mystic voice !
But thine own name, Echo,
Is thy dearest choice.

Farewell, mocking maiden,
Thou of thinnest air !
Never sorrow-laden,
Never torn by care !

ECHOES OF HELLAS

Keep to thy replying
 E'en though all be vain,
 Fate's stern will defying,
 Sing, and sing again !

5. SUNRISE

" Die unbegreiflich hohen Werke
 Sind herrlich wie am ersten Tag."
 Goethe, *Faust*, Prol. im Himmel.

Lo, the Orient lightening !
 Imminence of dawn !
 Mystic radiance heightening
 As the Day is born !
 Glowing colours, brightening,
 Ushering in the Morn !

Grey to golden turning,
 In thy dower of light !
 Sky and cloudland burning
 In refulgence bright !
 Colour-toning, spurning
 Greatest artist's might.

Whence thy wondrous glory
 Sky with flame-lit ray ?
 Wilt thou as in hoary
 Past, renew alway
 Such a colour-story
 As thou tell'st to-day ?

¹ The incomprehensibly high works
 Are as splendid as on the first day.

Whence those light-shafts bringing,
 Such a wealth of sheen?
 Ever upward winging
 Flight toward heaven serene;
 Whence that aureole clinging
 To each magic scene?

Elements enshrined
 In a temple bright!
 Where the soul inclinèd
 Worships in delight!
 Mystery divinèd;
 Wondrous sacred sight!

Glory of the Orient!
 Morn-created strand!
 Forms fantastic, transient,
 Fairy-like and grand!
 Flaming circumambient,
 Sun-kissed golden land!

6. THE SILVERY MOON

O . . . voller Mondenschein,
 Ach! könnt ich doch . . .
 in deinem lieben Lichte gehn,

In deinem Thau gesund mich baden!¹

Goethe, *Faust*, Part I.

Oh, orb resplendent of the Night!
 Thy placid grace bedecks the scene
 With gentle glow of silvery light
 And soft irradiance, white, serene.

¹ O glow of full-orbed moon,
 Could I but in thy well-belovèd light
 Now walk, and bathe my soul
 Till in thy dew again 'twere whole!

No maddening beams that scorch and stress
Descend from heaven, thou Queen of Grace,
When in thy perfect loveliness
Thou shewest there thy chaste, pure face.

Oh, tell ! fair Queen of magic power,
What thou hast seen since those far days
When Thea gave thee birth ; the hour
When first thou graced celestial ways ;

When Hyperion's fond caress,
Had in the day when Heav'n was young
Bestowed such wealth of blessedness,
That thy great praise shall e'er be sung.

What gift of Beauty is thy dower !
For when Apollo leaves the sky
Night-blooming Cereus opes her flower
To bid thee welcome, there on high.

So we too, earth-born mortals, wake
To subtler life when thou dost reign,
From flow'r our souls example take,
And we forget the Day, profane.

The day but witnesses our fall
From nobler life to weary toil ;
He sees us, humbled as a thrall,
Compelled Existence to assoil.

When thou dost reign in skies above,
Thy radiance flows through every heart ;
In Daphne's groves we think of Love,
And reck not Cupid's fiery dart.

In gentle pulses streams thy glow
Whose magic power shall e'er re-form
Our inmost selves ; till ebb and flow
Of thy life-tide shall us transform.

Whence comes the peace in thy cool light,
That yields to us such spirit-calm,
That nerves us for earth's rugged fight,
And salves our wounds like Gilead's balm ?

That our poor spirits, ill at ease,
So rich endows with courage new ;
And from Care's cruel shackles frees,
And give the Heart diviner view ?

How garish tones in thy soft light
Are swift transformed to colours fair !
With softer grace is earth bedight,
And every charm seems doubly rare.

The flying clouds glow silv'er-bright
When thou dost reign ; and oft a crown
Of colours delicately light
Thou givest, symbol of renown.

And thou dost dower both sea and lake
With shafts of ever lovely glow,
That origin in heaven take,
But yield their charm to earth below.

O fairest queen of evening skies !
What tongue can worthy sing thy praise ?
Our thankful tribute would arise
For glories of thy matchless rays !

7. THE WOOD-NYMPHS

Τῷδ' ὑπὸ τὰς πλατάνους ἀπαλῶ τετρυμένους ὕπνῳ
 εὐδεν Ἔρως, Νύμφαις λαμπάδα παρθέμενος'.¹

Marianus, *Anth. Pal.*, ix. 627.

MIDST the flickering leaves
 That the zephyrs kiss,
 As the setting sun weaves
 With a radiant bliss
 Golden veils, with his shafts of light ;
 In the rustle and shade
 Of the umbrage green,
 In the darkening glade
 With its shadowing sheen,
 Flit the phantom-like Wood-Nymphs bright !

In the pine-forests' gloom
 Midst its outlines dim,
 As if presaging doom
 By its silence grim ;
 And in solitudes, weird as Night ;
 Where no footfall is heard,
 And all sound seems strange ;
 And where never a bird
 Through its shadows may range ;
 Roam the Dryads with footsteps light !

When with thunderous roll
 Giant lightnings play ;
 When the booming waves toll
 For the dying day ;

¹ Here under the plane-trees, overcome by gentle slumber, slept Eros, to the Nymphs giving his torch.

When the wind in the forest sighs
To the swaying of bough ;
Or midst whispering leaves
In weird cadence tells how
It mourns and it grieves ;
Croon the Wood-Nymphs with sad grey eyes !

In the lowering day ;
In the starless night ;
When the storm-fiends play
In their wild delight,
Midst the brown, and the gold and green
Soft bedecking, and rare,
Of the Autumn sad ;
Scatt'ring leaves, tinted fair,
In their revels mad ;
Wail the Dryads with sorrowing mien !

When in Orient, Dawn
With its perfumed air,
Bursts forth into morn
Fresh, joyous and fair,
Re-creating with faërie hand ;
When with azure and gold
And with pearly grey,
And in splendour untold,
Is ushered the Day ;
Sing the Nymphs of the sweet wood-land !

And in plane-tree's cool shade
Where great Eros oft sleeps,
Like the nymphs, ev'ry maid
Her dear trysting-place keeps
All aflame, with the Love-God's fire.
And behold ! through each Day,

From us hid, yet anigh,
 All the dryads in play
 Dance and sing; croon and sigh;
 When Æolus awakens his lyre.

They are joyous and gay
 When Pan, on his flute
 Sings of love and his sway;
 They are saddened when lute
 Tells in cadences wild and cold
 Of the storms bringing death.
 For each nymph, pining, dies,
 Fading out as the breath
 Of Life passes, and flies
 From her tree in the mountain and wold.

8. THE UNDINE

Κύπριδος οὗτος ὁ χῶρος, . . . ἀμφὶ δὲ πόντος
 δειμαίνει, λιπαρὸν δερκόμενος ξόανον.¹
 Anyte, *Anth. Pal.*, ix. 144.

IN the tremulous tints of the Ocean,
 In the azure-lit pools of its deeps,
 Midst its waves with unending commotion,
 'Mongst the crimson and gold of its steep,
 Dost thou revel, O sea-maiden fairest,
 In thy crystalline palaces rarest.

In thy realm there are wonders and glories;
 In thy grottoes, cool shades of retreat;
 Through thy rocky and coralline stories,
 Are the thrones, where sea-goddesses meet.

¹ This is the realm of Cyprus, . . . the deep sea around is troubled looking on her shining image.

And the halls where thy beauty's beholden
Are as rose, or are em'rald and golden !

Midst the swaying of brightest sea-flowers,
Whose sweet forms tempt the wavelet's caress ;
In thy delicate pearl-tinted bowers,
And the sea-deep's dark-lighted largesse ;
Thou dost roam, O fair maid of the ocean,
With thy wanton and undulous motion !

When the waves leap on high in their madness,
While their crests coldly hiss out their rage ;
When the storm-fiends in sinister gladness,
In their wild and fierce revels engage ;
Undismay'd is thy rush through the waters,
O thou loveliest of Neptune's fair daughters !

And at even in Ocean's strange gloaming,
In the soft em'rald sheen of its caves,
In the gloom of thy sea-dungeons roaming,
Undisturbed by the rolling of waves
As thy halls they are lashing and smiting,
Thou dost play, e'en in shadow delighting.

When again comes the flush of the dawning,
With its promise and earnest of day ;
When the radiance of East, in the morning,
Makes us joyous, light-hearted and gay ;
So thy heart, ne'er with sorrow o'erladen,
Sings for gladness, O glorious maiden !

In the sapphire and green of the Oceans,
Midst their soft pearly tints, as they leap
In the joy of their serpentine motions,
When the waves are unrestful, or sleep ;
Then in crystal-clear world, ever gladly,
Must thou revel, sweet sea-maiden, madly !

9. THE ATOLL

Auf einem meerumblauten Eiland
 . . . wie eine dunkle Rose
 Blitzend auf den Purpurwogen.¹
 Ernst Oskar Linke, *Eros and Psyche*.

FAIRYLAND in sapphire setting !
 Rich and fragrant, bathed in light !
 Wave and sun-kissed ! All forgetting
 Save thy Nymphs and Naiads bright.

Ever revelling in the foaming
 Of thy crested wavelets, white ;
 Or by emerald lakelet roaming
 In the haze of summer light ;

Or upon the white sands flitting,
 Of thy pearly-margined edge ;
 Or in shade of palm-trees, sitting,
 Glancing at thy coral ledge.

Swift I see each wave come rolling
 Towards thee with an angry roar.
 Ah ! its boom is but the tolling
 For its death upon thy shore.

Proudly each, its crest advancing,
 In its fierce tumultuous wrath,
 By thy wonder-power, entrancing,
 Soon is chang'd to snow-white path.

Each then clings, as if endearing,
 To thy margins, anger-spent ;
 Its return to ocean fearing,
 Restless, sad and discontent.

¹ Upon an isle, by sapphire seas surrounded,
 That glittered like a dark rose upon the purple waves.

All thy winsomeness confessing,
Smiling bright or weeping sad;
Welcomes every wave caressing
As if Life were ever glad.

Graceful ever, island fairest
Thou of Paradise must ween!
In thy pearl and sapphire, rarest,
And thine emerald-glinting sheen.

10. THE STATUE OF MEMNON

Ἐνθεν ἐγὼ λυρζοῖδος· ὑποκρούσας δέ με λεπτῇ
χερμάδι, τοῦ κόμπου μαρτυρίην κόμισαι¹

Aῖψ. Plan., 279.

THOU dark colossal form, so stern and grey
Impassive, cold! Thy shape against the sky
Remains in silent grandeur; where alway,
In Egypt's plains, thy towering face on high
Is reared to greet, for aye, the wondrous Dawn;
And welcome golden glow of splendid Morn.

The starry heavens are shining, and the Night
Seems instinct with a Life that ebbs and flows;
A moment dark, then next is pulse of light;
And thus, mysterious, ever comes and goes
A strange sad sense, that though to human sight
But stone, yet thou canst feel Aurora's might.

With steady gaze thou lookest on the East
Where radiant Light gives birth to joyous Day;
And all its glories shine, of which the least
In beauty far transcends each earth-born ray.

¹ Henceforth I sing as to a lyre; play upon me lightly, with a stone,
and bear testimony of my boast.

And thou dost know of splendour past, and great,
And canst remember all, and yet canst wait.

The Æons roll along beneath Time's sway
His restless chariot; urged along its course
By Powers, revealing every night and day
How mighty and resistless is that Force
Which ministers to Moira's stern dark will;
That changeless mandate that Man must fulfil.

And men and nations, mighty empires come
And go; they pass away forgotten, sad.
The noisy world moves on with stir and hum,
With its insensate greed for gold, and mad.
But thou, quiescent witness of it all,
Thou carest naught that empires rise or fall!

The Night-Winds sigh, and tones around I hear
That sound like giant spirits, that must cry
For new and richer life upon this sphere;
For some new aim that now is drawing nigh;
For some fresh shaping of Life's scheme and plan,
Where Man shall cease to curse his fellow man.

I see the glint of star upon thy head;
And, as its glittering pulses come and go,
I hear some song as from the mighty Dead;
In ghostly cadence rise and fall, and flow
Like stream of Music from some other World
Where newer things are to the Soul unfurled.

In silence of the Night, I, awed, behold
Thy mighty outline; and I wonder then
What dark decrees of Fate are yet untold
To human Life, within this prison-den
Of Earth; where ever cruel Ego-lust
Degrades the Soul and humbles it in dust,

And in the darkness, deep, mysterious, strange,
The ghosts of things in some new life unfold
Their phantom forms; and, as they seem to range
Their shadow-shapes, and mystic lines, controlled
By Fate's strong hand, appears a glow of light;
And for a moment all that is to be, is bright !

These forecast forms of what is yet to be
Are flashed before the Soul's material eyes
For but a moment brief; and ere I see
And fix the margins of the shapes that rise,
They vanish swift, and leave but pained sense
Of gloom and mist, impenetrably dense.

By subtlest light of starry heavens, there seem
To float before my vision, all the aims
Of Ethiopia's King—great Memnon's dream
Of greatness of his people—and his claims
For Priam, Troy's last king; to end in woe
When great Achilles met him, as a foe.

Colossal figure ! Are thy soul and mine
With Memnon's interfused, that thou must seek
In Memory's wondrous store, and ever find
Remembrance of that bold and mighty Greek ?
And dost thou feel, and wilt thou ever know
The anguish of that combat with thy foe ?

And dost thou in some strange soul-world recall
Thine onslaught on Antilochus, first-born
Of Nestor and Eurydice, whose fall
Came swift at hand of Memnon, when from torn
And wounded body, fled his soul away
To Hades' misty shores, from Trojan fray ?

And does the soul of Memnon, with thee, view
In recollection's maze, old Nestor's gage
Of battle, when he, sorrow-stricken, knew
His son, not Vict'ry, but pale Death as wage
Had earned; and that too, at the stalwart hand
Of him, whose image bold thou art, and grand?

And doth thy Soul, in some mysterious way,
With Memnon's too unite, in great recall
Of high refusal to engage that day
With agèd Nestor, lest in his dire fall
Should come not glory, but a sense of shame
That Memnon great could merit martial blame;

Could meet in an unequal strife, the old;
And vanquish then, not manly strength, but Age?
'Twas not for Memnon, noble, brave, and bold,
To compass Nestor's fall! 'Twas his to gauge
His prowess great against Achilles' might
And shew how Trojan heroes' friends can fight.

Alas, Great Memnon! by Achilles' arms
Supported by the Gods, thou then wert slain,
Amidst the clash and clangour and alarms
Supremely brave, and yet thy skill was vain.
And has thine image, cold, impassive, calm,
Remembering all, for wounded pride found balm?

And know'st thou too how great Aurora bright,
Disconsolate, did'st plead to Jove with tears?
Thy Mother, who each morn in glorious light
Appears in eastern skies to banish fears
Of Night's dark reign; dost thou then understand
Why Jove distinguished thee, by high command?

What high portent had Jove's decree, that thou,
In warrior-death, should ever honoured be
By war-lament of birds; and thus avow
That thou, Aurora's son, of high degree
In Man's and God's esteem art held for aye,
Thou Monarch brave, whose mem'ry shall not die?

How oft in morn, from meadow fresh and fair
We see Aurora's tears; perpetual sign
Of grief that thou wert slain! Ah, what despair
And weight of woe it brought: and yet benign
Was Jove, and heard Aurora in her prayer,
And granted thee immortal fame, and rare.

.
A thankful people raised this image great,
A symbol of thy noble self and reign;
With steady gaze in splendid regal state
It waits to greet the rising Sun again;
And thou, though heedless of the petty things
Art glad when Dawn comes on her radiant wings.

What though Cambyses, with his hand profane
With flush of conquest, proud, yet mean of soul,
Should strive with wanton ruthless hand, insane,
To wreak his vengeful hate, nor once control
Destroying lust. He earned eternal shame
By mean-souled wishes to destroy thy fame!

'Tis well when souls debased reveal how they
Would shape their plans did Heaven not interfere;
'Tis well when victors insolent, the way
To death quick find by trivial wound; and fear
E'en late can learn. For Gods are not defied;
And he whom Apis wounds, repents his pride.

Cambyzes, ignominious king, is now
 A poor forgotten shade, and soon his name
 Will pass from Record that the great endow
 To well-deserved oblivion ; while the fame
 Of noble Memnon shall endure and shine
 As long as Dawn bestows her light benign.

Thou wondrous image that can still endure
 The ravage, not alone of Persian king,
 But of the wildest tempest, and the lure
 Of Time, and midst the shudd'ring Earth can sing
 Thine elemental song, though she may stress
 And rend thee in thy lonely wilderness !

.

From towering heights thou lookest for the Morn ;
 Thou seest first the glow in eastern sky !
 That heralds forth, that Day will soon be born,
 And knowest first his hour is drawing nigh !
 And when Aurora's radiance floods the earth
 Her light upon thy face declares its birth.

And when great Phœbus, in the new-born Day,
 Sends forth his beams of light, like lances bright,
 Thy face is kindled with the golden ray
 And luminous thou singest with delight.¹
 Thus as each day Aurora's footsteps guide
 Thy wondrous song bursts forth on Music's tide.

What Omen of the Future dost thou speak ?
 What marvel thus foreshadow by thy song ?
 What mystery of Hope dost thou thus seek
 To give to Man, whose heart must ever long

¹ It is supposed that a priest struck on a resounding stone at sunrise, making a sound like the twanging or the breaking of a harp-string.

For brighter rays than those that greet the Earth;
For Life, where all things have some truer worth?

Will there arise in days that yet shall come,
A newer Dawn, more glorious Light, and Rays
Of richer radiance? Or shall Soul be dumb
And silent as the grave, for endless days?
Or is thy song the oracle of Hope
That tells of Future's fairer horoscope?

Will Soul from Worlds on Worlds then ever see
Some wondrous glowing Sun, whose brighter beams
Shall wake within it richer melody?
And shall at last there flow from it, like streams
Of Music, some diviner flood of Sound
That makes the newer world with Joy abound?

Ah Hope! Art thou then only trickster strange,
And but a mocking sprite that speaks in vain?
Will all the æons witness naught but Change,
That changeless spurns the Soul with high disdain?
Great Soul! Why hidest thou from us the Truth,
That could endow our broken souls with Youth?

.

There are no answers to our Soul's great cry!
We dream and dream, and wonder what we see!
We live our little day, and weep and die;
And no one knows the depths of Mystery.
Alas for Man! 'Tis his alone to sigh,
To wonder, and to hope: we know not why!

II. ODE TO NIGHT

Ein Teil der Finsternis, die sich das Licht gebär . . . der Mutter Nacht.—Goethe, *Faust*, Teil I.

O NIGHT ! by whose almighty powers
The veil is lifted from our eyes ;
That we behold
In splendour cold,
Those starry depths that grace the hours
When Day yields up her life, and dies.

By what supernal grace hast thou
Command of all that radiant field ;
From whence the beams
Of stellar streams,
In tremulous light, on thy dark brow
The visions of their glories yield ?

'Tis thou, O Night ! that hast unrolled
The mighty scroll, on which our fate
Is written firm
From term to term.
'Tis thou hast fashioned that high mould,
In which are formed things small and great.

By what strange magic power, concealed,
Dost thou unfold, in deeps of space
That scintillant world
We see unfurled ?
What Angel hath this wealth revealed
Long, long ere man began his race ?

¹ A part of the darkness that bore the light . . . of Mother Night.

For thou, O Night ! alone hast shewn
The greatest things of Space and Time ;
The motions past
Of systems vast ;
That worlds on worlds, decrepit grown,
Again shine forth with light sublime.

Thus, through thy sway alone, we know
That quenched worlds, though now so drear,
Again inflame ;
And thus proclaim,
Through purging fires, Life's fresher glow,
And race renewed, in Hope and Fear.

For 'tis when great Creation's brought
Beneath the shadow of thy wing ;
And sense unbars
The worlds of stars ;
That we, to high emotion wrought,
Can see thy might, thy praises sing.

'Twas on thy bosom, glorious Night !
That first we knew of endless realm,
Where sun on sun
Its course hath run ;
Fulfilling its predestined flight,
With Power, as Angel at its helm.

Thou, too, it was, whose presence strange,
Brought first to view those spiral forms,
Immensely great,
That wonder-state
From which are born, through change on change,
In fiery mists and blazing storms,

New Suns and Worlds, and ordered spheres :
New suns, with wildest flames invest ;
Whose onward march
O'er heaven's arch,
For countless leagues, to us appears
Eternal quiet, calmest rest !

That wondrous endless starlit space
Had ne'er been ours but for thy power ;
For recreant Day
So hides away
Thy splendours great, that not a trace
Is seen or felt, throughout his hour.

He hides away the worlds on fire ;
When massive orbs with frightful crash
Collide and blaze,
To our amaze ;
The comet, too, with portents dire,
A wanderer strange ; and meteor flash.

He, too, conceals the phantom light
Of star-dust in the Milky Way ;
The mystic seven¹
In jewell'd heaven,
Those daughters born of Atlas' might
And Pleione fair, the sea-nymph gay.

He hides the flame of Sirius bright ;
The ruddy glow of Scorpio's Heart ;²
Heaven's diadems
And radiant gems ;
All glories that those realms bedight :
They may not shine, till he depart.

¹ Pleiades,

² Antares,

Through thee, O Night ! diviner Truth
Now stands revealed ; the veil is raised ;
For all that Day
In his display
Hath shewn, are but the things, forsooth,
Of briefest Time, though many-phased.

And though in splendid proud array,
With haughty and insistent mien,
Refulgent Day
Asserts his sway ;
Yet 'tis not his to point the way
To that more glorious, grander scene,

That ever waits thy high command ;
That only in thy presence calm,
O glorious Night !
With beauty dight,
Appears ; when thy majestic hand
Strong lifts the veil, reveals the charm.

'Tis then alone Creation's great ;
'Tis then we traverse mightier space ;
No finite reach
Of human speech
May tell the bounds of thine estate,
Thine endless realm ; thou Queen of Grace !

For when thou reignest, then we learn
How weak and false, how blind and mean,
Is all our sight
In heaven's light ;
And must, thus humbled, longing turn
Away from meaner things, terrene.

ECHOES OF HELLAS

No longer hidden, stand revealed
The mighty reach of Time, at last ;
And space immense
Transcending sense ;
And light of stars which now but yield
The record as in distant past.

Our poor earth-tale of man's desire ;
Of rapine, lust, and thirst of blood ;
Of greed of wealth ;
Ignoble stealth ;
Of hellish pride and malice dire ;
Contumely, hate ; and evil flood

Of things that curse and rack and pain ;
Scarce ranges o'er ten thousand years :
A moment frail
In that great scale
By which we hope in vain to gain
Some measure of Time's great career !

But thou, O primal Night ! art first ;
For thou art Being uncreate.
Before the dawn
Of first-born morn
Wert thou ! Before its splendour burst
On Universe, impenetrate.

With nascent stir of shaping thought,
Monition both of Life and Form ;
When naught, in drape
Of shadow-shape,
Had yet appear'd, with strange import ;
Nor yet of things was born the norm.

And dost thou know, mysterious Night,
Thou womb of all things inchoate,
What silent land
Or mystic strand
Saw birth at first of phantoms light,
Incipient forms, yet uncreate,

Of things not yet, but yet to be?
And dost thou know when came the " Word,"
Whose mighty power
In that great hour—
The morning of Eternity—
To trembling shape all Being stirred?

Didst thou, when vibrant movement came
To touch the Soul with things that were,
Nor reck nor care
How it should fare?
Didst thou not know that in the flame
Of anguish, it should moaning stir?

When first, from shadow of thy wings
Thou sawest Form on Form emerge,
Didst thou not dream
The living stream
Should ever, while to Life it clings,
But sorrow find, and Misery's scourge?

Didst thou not know, on rack of pain,
Shall living things their entrance make
To life and hope;
In vain to cope
With various ills, that whelm like rain—
Of scorching flame at martyr's stake?

Didst thou not dream of rapine, war,
Of cruel lust, insensate greeds,
Of madd'ning fears,
Of burning tears,
Of famine, want? Didst thou deplore
Fate's cruel wreckage, frightful deeds?

Ah, Night! thou goddess, distant, strange!
An everlasting witness, thou,
Of things that are
On every star;
Of things that were; of every change.
Before thee, silent, we must bow!

Thou art as Sphinx in desert sands,
With face impassive, solemn, grand!
No answer there,
Nor pity, care,
For dwellers in terrestrial lands,
But Life or Death, at thy command.

Oh, could we wrest thy secret great,
What answer to our saddest plaint
Would then be ours?
Would sorrow's hours
Be soften'd? Would our hearts, elate
With brighter hopes, feel less constraint?

O silent Night! thou hearest not;
Like Death, thy sister, thou art strange.
Our strong appeal
Thou canst not feel.
To human souls nor cold nor hot
Art thou, and naught in thee may change.

To thee, all Life is shadow-play,
But phantom-forms that come and go ;
And mad all haste ;
All thing are chaste ;
To thee, there's naught that's sad or gay ;
For cold thy brow is as the snow.

To thee all reach of Time and Space,
Are trivial forms of conscious Mind ;
That mock or please ;
Give pain or ease ;
It matters not. And power and place,
Ambitions high, or folly blind,

Are but vagaries in thy sight.
And should creation's shapes retire,
And be at rest
On thy cold breast,
O goddess thou ! Relentless Night !
'Twill not to Love thy heart inspire.

For thou hast seen the highest hope
Frustrate by wreck and crash of world ;
The Soul's great cry
Aspiring high,
Crushed by Creation's aim and scope ;
The flag of black Despair unfurl'd !
.

The night-winds moan. I look alone
And upwards at the glittering stars.
Their tremulous light
And splendours bright
Give rest and peace. And these atone
For cold despair. And nothing mars

The glow of joy. And stranger still,
 A fearless strength the soul acquires,
 As from above
 Steals sense of Love.
 And thus, O Night ! for good or ill,
 Thou singest in celestial choirs.

12. ANTARCTIC NIGHT

σίγα, καὶ μελέτα ζῶν ἔτι τὸν θάνατον.¹
 Palladas, *Anth. Pal.*, xi. 300.

In the long dark night,
 Where the Austral Light
 O'er the fields of snow
 Shews its flick'ring glow ;

In the landscape grey,
 Where the Milky Way
 In the heaven serene
 Shines with nebulous sheen ;

In the trackless waste,
 Where all feverish haste
 Has for æons untold
 Died away in the cold ;

Where on ice-capped peak
 Hid in cloudland bleak,
 Or in crevasses deep
 The frost-elves leap,

And caper, and strive
 As the storm-fiends drive ;
 Or with eldritch tone
 In the shadows groan ;

¹ Silence ! And though living, yet meditate on Death.

Where the air-sprites keen
Flit o'er crystalline scene,
As they revel and fight
With their lances white ;

Or they dance and fling
Their arrows, that sting
The eyes of the wight
Who beholds their flight ;

Where faint-glowing, and strange,
The Auroras change
All those colourings fine
That their margins outline ;

And the dark-sapphire sky
Seems a background on high
For the delicate stream,
With its phantasy-gleam ;

Where the radiant stars,
And where Sirius and Mars
Seem so magically bright
And resplendently light ;

Where the meteors rash
Their most scintillant flash
E'er display, as they die
In the atmosphere high ;

There reigns Nature supreme !
There Life's turbulent stream,
Its aspiring in vain,
And its sadness and pain ;

Its passion and pride ;
Its ruddiest tide ;
Its wild mad race
For wealth and for place ;

Its struggle and clash ;
The insensate, rash,
And needless greed
That is really its creed ;

And Life's passion-fed aims,
And insatiate claims ;
Its malevolent hate
And sinister fate ;

Have vanished for aye
In the clear cold sky ;
In the nebulous light
Of the sad long night !

And we learn the fate
Of all earthly state ;
When Life hath fled,
Leaving cold and dead

All the dust-born things.
And the mystery clings—
Like the shroud of the dead—
As to " why " hath sped

Each world in its place
On its strange swift race,
With unmeasured pace
Through the wilds of space.

In the greyest tones ;
In the wind's strange moans ;
In the terrible cold
Of that region old ;

In its quietude grand,
Unprofaned by the hand
Of man with his greeds
And his petty creeds ;

In the splendid waste,
Where all worry and haste
For ever have passed—
For it may not last :—

There is glory untold
That none may unfold ;
For the Frost-King's land
Is a great, silent strand !

And the polar snows
Where th' Aurora glows,
And that desolate waste,
Are the sad foretaste

Of this World's dark fate.
And coldly elate
Shall the Ice-King reign
O'er his Earth-domain !

13. THE PHANTOM UNIVERSE

These . . . were all spirits, and
 Are melted into air, into thin air :
 And like the baseless fabric of this vision,
 The cloud-capp'd towers, the gorgeous palaces,
 The solemn temples, the great globe itself,
 Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve.
 And like this insubstantial pageant faded
 Leave not a rack behind. We are such stuff
 As dreams are made of.—*The Tempest*, Act. IV.

O SPIRIT of the dread and lonely Past ! Arise ;
 Unroll the fabric of the Soul, on which is limned
 The ghost of shadow-forms, beneath, above, the skies :
 Let them appear in Mem'ry's wondrous realms, undimmed
 As on mysterious Dawn, when first a light-pulse thrilled
 The endless reach of Space ; when first the Soul was
 wrapped
 In phantom-matter-forms ; and knew itself entrapped
 In Shadow-Being, vast, unreal, and Ego-willed.

O Spirit of the gloomy unknown Past, when Night
 Without beginning reigned alone ! ope thou our eyes ;
 That we may see and know and understand aright
 The shimm'ring countless forms of mighty Worlds ; that
 rise
 Like mists of faintest light, in depth and height and length
 And breadth of Space, immensely infinite, and grand
 Beyond all range of human thought on dreamland's
 strand,
 Or in the mighty sweep of Fancy in its strength.

O Spirit ! Thou of mystery supreme and cold ;
 Of Silence everlasting ; thou alone canst know
 The story of the phantom mists, in days of old,
 That hovered strange, extended, luminous like snow

In flashes of auroral glow, through dreary space ;
Whose mighty changes, æon-long, were Soul-impelled ;
And thus built up the spiral glories, unexcelled,
Of shining stellar worlds and suns and stars, apace.

When pall of Night o'erspreads this hapless earthly sphere,
With awe we look on high at blazing suns, and feel
That we behold but motes in æther-ocean, here,
In our own little realm of spatial deeps. We kneel
O'ercome, bewildered, and with touch of things immense
We seem to see that Life and Hope and Thought are
naught ;
That underneath the sun, in Web of Maya caught,
The greatest things are those of Space and Time and Sense.

We gaze in wonder on the star-gemmed vault on high ;
Anon there flashes forth a radiant new-born star :
New worlds have been created in the strange sad sky :
They cannot hide themselves ; and witness from afar
That there is awful wreck of matter and the crash
Of worlds on worlds, in fiery main of glowing flame,
Where all is purged of dross ; all honour and all shame
Has vanished in the frightful flame and glow and flash.

When we behold the wand'ring comet come, from deep
Of space on its long path ; and know that countless
years
Have fled since this strange visitor, its last great leap
Across the void, commenced, to reach our sun ; and fears
And hopes, of grinning ape or simian form, of man
Of face divine ; we know have but endured a day
In Time's great scale ; and that the rise and work and
sway
Of mighty empires are but naught in Nature's plan.

.

In vastest space we see all starry worlds upheld
In æther-touch; great radiant suns, whose torrent flame
Shoots forth, like glorious flashing lance in wrath compelled
By giant God, or heaving surge-like to proclaim
The tumult of the lives on lives that find their lot
Is cast in Time and Space and Form, and held in thrall.
We know the tiny form of man, his years, his all,
Seem small beneath contempt, in Nature's scheme and plot.

O phantom universe, how great beyond all grasp
Of conscious thought thou art! In Space and Time
and Form
We come and go, as motes in beam of light. One gasp
And all is o'er. We shrink and fear in tempest-storm,
When vivid lightnings blaze, when winds in fury blow;
And are appalled and horror-racked, when earth sends
spume
Of fiery deeps, and flame-convulsions; that illume
Poor doomèd man and beast, o'erwhelmed in lava flow.

But thou, O Spirit! e'er untouched by Sense; unseen
By eye; thou art the Seer's self; the heart and core
Of Being. And the shadow-things are but the keen
Definèd stream of everlasting Ego; or
The one and only Life and Thought that fills all space,
All Time, all Form; all things that were or are to come;
All torrent-sounds of whirling worlds; or silence dumb
Of dank, decayed and dreary realms of ended race.

So phantom-universes all, ye come and go;
And in the world of Mind appear, and live, and die;
And vain and idle is the thought that Soul must flow
Perforce on Time's great river; where we fear and
cry,

And are appalled with phantom-things, that must away
When moment comes, where Soul throws off its galling
chains,
And leaps to fuller being ; where it ever reigns
As Lord of Life supernal, and in endless Day.

For Seraph-Soul unfettered, pure and glowing, grand,
In truth completely fills all boundless Time and Space ;
And Form is but the creature of its mighty hand ;
Its inf'nite shadow-garment, wrought with wondrous
grace !
But who can tell, in words of coarsest matter-world,
What glories are beyond the universe of Star
And Sun ; when Soul fulfils itself ; and when, no bar
Of Self preventing, all its fulness is unfurled ?

For words of our material world are but the crude
Imperfect symbols of the phantom-forms themselves :
All thought and reason, all our knowledge, but the rude
Untrue, distorted echo of the Mind, that delves
In things that pass away ; that vanish as unreal.
But thou, transcendant Spirit, seest, knowest all ;
E'en though, when bound in form of flesh, is no recall
Of those irradiant glorious realms, where all is real !

III.—SONGS OF DEATH

I. MORS BENIGNA

Ἄστυρ πρὶν μὲν ἔλαμπες ἐνὶ ζωῷσιν Ἐφῶς,
νῦν δὲ θανῶν λάμπεις Ἐσπερος ἐν φθιμένοις.¹

Plato, *Anth. Pal.*, vii, 670.

Proœmium.

O ANGEL ! Thou
Whose stern dark brow
Repels the fearsome soul of man,
Whence came thy pow'r
To fix the hour
That marks the term of Life's short span ?

Art thou our friend ?
Or dost thou send
Thy shafts on cruel, dire intent,
To bring to naught
All things we thought
Of worth ? All those on whom we leant ?

All we held dear ;
Whose ev'ry tear
Was ours through crimson kinship's thread ;
And, ah too, those
Whose eyes we close ;
Our joys and hopes, for whom we pled ?

¹ Star of Dawn, thou didst once shine on the Living : now dead thyself (in greater splendour), dost thou, as Star of Eve, shine on the Dead.

O Angel ! Thou
Of gloomy brow,
Thou standest silent ; calmly grand.
In mystic spheres
Where Truth appears,
I hear response ; and understand

The sad surprise
Of thy dark eyes,
The look of inf'nite sympathy.
And thus I hear
Thine answer clear :
And past is all antipathy !

Carmen Mortis.

Ah, earth-born frail !
Though spectre pale
I seem to thee, or Angel dark ;
I from above
Am sent in love
To quench for aye Life's feeble spark.

When thou dost sleep
I vigil keep
And wait the mandate from on high,
That calls away
To brighter day,
To realms beyond thine earth and sky.

Yet thou dost fear
The end is drear
Of life uncertain, troubled, sad ;
Yet she who hears
Thy fate, and shears
Thy woven thread of life, is glad.

ECHOES OF HELLAS

Ah, earth-born strange !
Is every change
To thee, a moment new of fear ?
And know'st thou not
That human lot
Is grand alone, when I am near ?

Dost thou not know
That all things flow
From out the lap of greatest God ?
That Time's great span
Contains the plan
Perfected, of each life-path, trod ?

Dost thou not see,
Of earth-souls, ye
Must bear the subtlest, heaviest load ?
That spirit-sense
Must be intense
If ye would live in bright abode ?

As Night is shore,
Where ends the roar,
Unrest, and burden of each day ;
So too my firm
Hand marks the term
Of human life's tumultuous way.

Sleep's aspect mild
As guileless child,
Has made thee cast thy fear away ;
As angel bright
Of kindly light
Thou greetest him, without dismay.

With face of glee
He comes to thee ;
Thou smilest ; when with mighty sway,
But accents light,
He calls dark Night
To bear thee, till the new-born day.

Beneath a brow
Of sternness, thou
Canst ne'er discern the glance of friend ;
Nor in the hour
When my dread power
Shews forth, canst thou foresee the end

When shadows fall
Away ; and all
Unclouded, glorious, fair and bright,
The Truth appears ;
And groundless fears
Must fade ; as Day ends Life's strange Night.

For Maya's web,
Is Life's sweet ebb
And flow ; illusion all, the things
Of sense and sight ;
Like dream of night
They pass, when subtle Soul takes wings

And sings its way
Through endless day
In nobler realms of spirit-world ;
Where Time and Space
No more have place ;
Where higher mysteries are unfurled.

ECHOES OF HELLAS

For phantoms all
 Are things ye call
 The splendid mighty universe;
 With vast arrays
 Of Milky Ways;
 Which endless æthers e'er immerse

To make one whole;
 Whose pulse-thrills roll
 Like ocean waves, from shore to shore,
 With Lightning's speed.
 'Tis this ye heed;
 The shadow-world, for evermore !

But inner eyes
 See other skies
 In grander realms than worlds of sense;
 Where sight unbars
 More wondrous stars;
 And visions richer, more intense,

Are seen for aye
 By spirits high;
 By souls that love the things immense,
 Sublime and grand.
 In that great land
 The mists of Time and Space and Sense

No more appear;
 And spirits hear
 And see and feel, and touch and know
 In otherwise
 Than 'neath your skies
 Where shades deceive by demon-glow.

.

Thy heart is strained
And Fate arraigned
When I stretch forth my hand, and call
Thy little child;
Glad-eyed and mild.
Remember this :—Thou know'st not all.

Thou seest him lie
In pain, and die.
Alas for thee, that all thy dreams
Seem mocked, and crushed
Thy heart when hushed
For aye is voice of child ; and gleams

No more the eye
That seemed so nigh
To gate of Laughter and of Tears !
Alas, that thou
With clouded brow,
To sense of loss, should add thy fears !

But though all seems
Like troubled dreams ;
The issues interwove with pain ;
Oh ! mortal, know
Life's ebb and flow
In man or child is not in vain.

For to the dead
That which hath fled,
Is but the lure of lower things ;
That vanish all,
When sounds my call
To fuller life with spirit-wings.

ECHOES OF HELLAS

For on earth-sphere
All things are mere
Imperfect symbols of that state
Unchanging, where
Eternal, fair
And perfect, are the Real and Great.

Let young and old,
And timid, bold
Fear not to come, when I approach
And call away,
From earth-decay,
To fuller life, beyond reproach.

So, babe on breast,
Come then to rest !
Come youth or maid from Love's sweet play ;
Ye in the prime
Of life ; or time
When droops your frame, and comes dismay.

Come each, come all ;
For Life's base thrall
Shall not endure beyond thy need.
The end is won ;
Thy task is done ;
No more the phantom realm thou'lt heed.

I ope the gate
Of high estate
The world of the Eternal, grand !
Whose glories are
As brightest star !
The vast, unchanging, silent Land !

2. MORS IRRISOR

Πάντων μὲν μὴ φῦναι ἐπιχθονίοισιν ἄριστον
 μηδ' ἐσιδεῖν αὐγὰς ὀξέος ἡελίου·
 Φύντα δ' ὅπως ὤκιστα πύλας Ἀΐδαο περῆσαι
 Καὶ κεῖσθαι πολλὴν γῆν ἐπαμυσσόμενον.¹

Theognis, Bergk., 4^o edit. U. 425-8.

COME one, come all, to my festal halls,
 In the deeps of the earth, from whence ye came ;
 Come young and come old,
 Come timid and bold,
 To the arms that enfold
 In the dark and the cold.
 Come render thy body within these walls
 Renowned and great, though unheard *thy* fame.

From north, from south, and from east and west ;
 From the torrid seas and the polar snows ;
 From land and main,
 From mountain and plain,
 From temple and fane,
 Be ye vassal or thane ;
 Come swift to this haven of endless rest ;
 Where the storms ne'er break, and the wind ne'er blows.

Come, come, ye babes, from your mothers' breasts ;
 And fly swift from ills that all Life beset ;
 For could ye know how,
 Each innocent brow
 Must be stain'd by the slough
 Through which it must plough,
 You quickly would turn from the way that wrests
 At last ev'ry charm ; and leaves only regret.

¹ " Of all things not to come into the world is best, nor to see the rays of the piercing sun ; but once born, to pass swiftly through the gates of Hades and lie under a heavy load of earth."

Come, come ye children with great merry eyes,
With your lingering dreams of bright abode,
With your thoughtful gaze
And your dear pretty ways,
With your fears, and craze,
And your wonder, amaze ;
Come, come to my feast ; leave the world and its lies,
Its pains and its cheats, and Life's heavy load.

Come, come ; there are lures in each chamber and hall ;
Do you live for your comfits, your play and your dream ?
For lassies and boys
There are countless toys,
And there are no alloys
To your childish joys !
So do not delay, when I merrily call,
But dance a Death-dance, where my treasure doth gleam.

Come, come, ye brave youths, and ye maidens fair !
'Tis the spring of your life ; ye are gay, debonair ;
Your hope is strong ;
The whole day long
Your bright dream is of song.
Ha ! to me you belong,
Though your eyes are blue, and golden your hair ;
And you foolishly think that life hath no care.

Come, why not away in the fairest heyday
Of the generous stream, when the blood runs swift ?
Come stand on the brink
Of my river and drink
Lave in it and think,
You but gently will sink
To the marvellous hall where for ever you'll stay,
In unchanging array : for this is my gift.

Come, come ; for your guerdon there is endless surcease
Of all worry and fret, disappointment and cheats,
How near its edge steep
All through life you must creep ;
Oh, take now the leap
For the river is deep,
And its flow, now so slow, shall later increase,
Look, look ! How its darkness invites you, and greets !

Come, come, all ye matrons, and men in your prime ;
Why will ye delay for the baubles of earth ?
In my boundless estate
Great halls for you wait ;
And early or late
Ye must yield to your fate.
Come, come then, delay not. Is life so sublime
That ye crave for its gifts, without value or worth ?

Come, come, all ye agèd, whose days are but pain,
With bodies all bent and distorted of shape,
And wrinkled and grey ;
Come if saddened or gay,
Ye have done with play,
And with dance, roundelay ;
Come swiftly away, for the change is a gain :
Come unshrouded, or clad, or in mourning's black drape.

Come, come, ye prophets of evil or good ;
And ye noble souls who would higher aspire ;
With your innermost eye,
That looks to the sky ;
See ye not that a sigh
Is Life, and a cry
Of unsatiable Soul, for whom all the food
That you here can supply is but ashes of fire ?

All ye who dream that your power is great
And that tribute rich from Dame Nature you'll wrest,
Ha ! ha ! She will laugh
Till you fall in the graff,
For in life you may quaff
Surely nothing but draff ;
They can give you but baubles, your Science and State,
Come away, come away, you starveling guest !

Come away while 'tis day, all ye soul-sick with play.
Will ye drink to the dregs of your life's sparkling wine ?
Will ye never achieve
But attempts to deceive,
And through your life weave
What ye ne'er shall retrieve ?
Come away while your laugh is reckless and gay,
Come away to the feasts of old Death, libertine.

Come ye wretchedest fools with your clownish ways ;
Ye rascals and rogues of a thousand tricks ;
Ye hellish brood
With your devil's feud ;
And ye innocent good
Who have evil withstood ;
Come one, come all, whether worthy of praise,
Or as black in your souls as th' infernal Styx.

Ha ! ha ! ye motley and earth-driven crew ;
Come humbled with shame, or with joy truly blest ;
Come young, come old,
Come coward or bold,
Ye of riches untold,
Or in rags and cold ;
Fear not, but come ; bid the skies an adieu,
Down, down to the halls of an endless rest !

My ministers roam through the breadth of your land,
And they seek you as guests, do the loyal band :
 With innocent look
 From volume or book
 In every nook
 In stream and in brook,
Do they find their way ; ye obey their command .
Did ye think in your pride, ye could stay my strong
 hand ?

For I am monarch whose high command
 No one may meet with a proud disdain ;
 When asserted my sway
 Ye shall swiftly obey ;
 And 'tis hopeless to pray,
 For ye may not stay ;
And none my wishes shall dare withstand :
 Ye are all of your liege, and resistance is vain.

Ha ! ha ! How I laugh and am fill'd with glee,
And my halls how they shew their richest array,
 When the thund'rous thud
 Of the surging flood,
 And the storm-wrack and scud,
 Chills to death all your blood ;
As it sweeps you in thousands away to the sea
 When my ministers hurl heaven's flood-gates away !

Ha ! ha ! How I laugh at your shrieks of despair,
 When 'tis time that you come, I will brook no delay
 See ye not earth assume
 Red convulsion and spume ;
 And the sulphurous fume,
 And fierce flames that consume ?

Stern Vulcan's hot tide, though infrequent and rare,
 Recks not, in its sweep, of your fear and dismay.

And I laugh when beholding your queer little nests,
Disappear in the sea and the chasms of earth ;
 When she shudders and rocks,
 As she thunders and knocks,
 And shatters and shocks ;
 And then scornfully mocks,
At her wreckage and waste before she rests
 In her high disdain for your things of worth.

And I fly with the flames in the forest and plain,
With their flickering leaps and their hissing blasts ;
 When each thing must lave
 In the red-hot wave ;
 When the cringing knave
 And the bold and brave,
Are alike engulfed in the fiery main,
 At whose wanton play ye are all aghast.

Ah ! ye think all in vain, if the whirlwind of flame,
And the Earthquake dread, and the red-hot rain,
 And the frightful leap
 In the earth's strange deep,
 And the surging steep
 Of the waters' sweep,
Of the tidal-wave in its desperate game—
 If all these ye escape, that my claim is vain.

Ha ! ha ! I can mock at your briefest delay ;
There are countless hordes in my wide domain ;
 On Earth there are few
 Your race to renew ;
 But here in pale hue
 I hold my review,
Of the numberless hosts that have lived their day :
 And now in my halls must for ever remain.

Come, come then at dawn, as the rays of the morn
Ascend to the sky in faint pulses of light ;
Or come ye at noon,
For the rest is a boon ;
Or come when the moon
Your faint spirits attune
To the evening's dark shades, seeming only to mourn
For the Day that has died. Or come ye at night.

Ha ! Come from the gloom and foreboding of doom ;
Aye, come when the light of your life hath fled.
In the tomb there is peace,
And your sorrows shall cease ;
From Fate's mad caprice
And from Pain there's release.
Then come to my halls, forever there's room ;
Come, come then, and join the great ranks of the Dead !

For Life's aching and toil, and its hope and cheer,
And its laughing and play, are for ever but one.
And the saddest unrest
Of a spirit unblest,
And the passionate zest
Of a great soul's quest,
Life's sorrows and joys, and all hope and fear,
Have vanished for aye ; Life's guerdon is won !

3. THE WRECK OF THE *TITANIC*

About one hour before the midnight of April 14, 1912, the *Titanic*, a mammoth "White Star" liner, on its way to New York with 2,500 souls on board, steaming full speed, notwithstanding that it had been warned of the presence of ice, struck the submerged pinnacles of an iceberg. It foundered before morning, about one-fourth only of the passengers being saved. Men had to be shot to prevent their rushing the boats and leaving the women behind. Unfilled boats pushed away drowning men and women. John Jacob Astor, an American millionaire, placing his wife in one of the boats said, as they parted, "The sea is calm; you are all right and in good hands; I'll meet you in the morning." She was saved: he was among the drowned. The occasion brought into exhibition examples both of splendid courage and of craven cowardice. Manhood and womanhood stood forth in honour, glorious, and poltroons of both sexes achieved an undying shame.

ἡ παραλάστωρ κηρῶν οἷδ' ὕγρῳ παύεται ἐν πελάγει.¹

Anth. Palat., IX, 269.

FROM the great frost realms, in an Arctic stream,
Came the giant bergs on their mission grim;
And the ice-fiends laughed as they shaped their scheme
To harass Earth's sons and daughters.
And the Frost-King's eyes flashed a cruel look,
As he sent forth berg after berg, and shook
To its base each glacial mount; as they took
Their plunge in the polar waters.

And the bergs came down on their way with glee,
In the blue cold waves of the Northern sea;
While the Ice-fiends laughed, in their mockery
At Man's puny effort and power.
And the white sea-wraiths came sudden and fast,
And the phantom shapes hovered o'er each mast
Of the ships that sailed o'er the main. At last
Arrived the great Death-God's hour.

¹ The Avenging Genius of the Fates rests not even in the watery seas.

In the air the horror of Ice-fiends' shrieks
Could be heard; and lo ! on the icy peaks
Were their glistening forms, as splendid as Greeks !

They laughed their great laugh of derision.
They had loved the Vikings, those earlier braves,
With their dauntless courage midst wind and waves,
In their fragile craft ; but the modern knaves
They scorned for their proud prevision.

For the Ice-fiends read on the scroll of Fate
Of the doom of Man, be he poor or great ;
And they know if death cometh, soon or late ;
And they mock at Man's vain forfending,
While they lie alert on the mighty deep
Awaiting their time ; though they seem to sleep
Till the moment comes when with Death they leap
On Man and on ship ; all ending.

They were friends of the men of olden days
With their simpler life and their wilder ways ;
But to modern man with his luxury-craze
They mete out a bitter scorning :
And they smiled, and thought of his outlook drear,
When, in icy air, their approach was near,
And when man in his pride to his doom should steer,
And Death shall come ere the morning.

For they saw his ship with its iron frame
And its urgent pace, as they southwards came,
With its lavish riches and giant name,
As if the great Gods defying.
And they laughed and said in the skipper's ear,
" Keep the splendid pace ; oh ! you need not fear
For your mighty ship, and its wealth and gear
Is safe ; "—but the fiends were lying.

Through the ambient air came the words of dread :—
 “ Ah beware, beware ! There is ice ahead ! ”
 But the mammoth ship on its way still sped
 To doom ere the next day’s dawning.
 For the pride of Man cannot brook delay ;
 Though the words were dread, he would never stay
 The great liner’s pace ; so—“ Away, away !
 To hell with the words of warning ! ”

And the Ice-fiends laughed at the wild employ
 Of these words of doom ; and they leapt for joy ;
 For the Gods make mad whom they would destroy,
 And smile when Man’s folly viewing.
 And the wind blew cold, and the mist’s white shroud
 Swift enfolded the ship ; and they mocked aloud,
 Did the Ice-fiends grin, at the skipper proud ;
 Whose words were his own undoing.

On the long decks pacing in gloom of Night
 Were the sons of Mammon, that God of Might
 In the Earth’s great schemes ; and their hopes were bright ;—
 They heard not the words of warning ;—
 In our own hands’ hollow we hold them ; yea
 Though the game be desperate we must play !
 And the Ice-fiends laughed as they heard them say :—
 “ We meet once more in the morning.”

There were those who sat in the friendly nooks,
 With their hands clasped firm, and with urgent looks
 Of the tenderest love in their eyes ; ah looks
 That told of their passionate yearning !
 For a stab of pain, and of dread defeat
 Seem to come from their innermost souls’ retreat
 As they bade “ Adieu,” and a great heart-beat
 Said :—“ Hold ! there is no returning.”

As the lovers lingered, how strange and tense
Were their thoughts ; for they saw but the dream immense ;
And they felt how poor were the things of sense ;

Thus near to Love's rest in the dawning.
And the brief caress, or the clinging kiss.
Was the bitter-sweet mingling of pain and bliss ;
In its prescient sadness they saw th' abyss,
Their haven of Love, ere the morning.

.

From the bleak look-out came the words again
" There is ice ahead " ; but 'twas too late then—
To the winds had been thrown all care—and when
The crash on the ice came, thund'ring,
They knew that Folly had come their way ;
That 'twas Madness driving ahead ; and they
In their fear, saw Death, in his pale array
Through their vain and insensate blund'ring.

From the Titan ship flashed the calls for aid,
For their hearts were wrung, and were sore afraid ;
When they saw the rent that the Ice-fiends made,
And the flood that was in it pouring.
And the Ice-fiends watched each craven soul
Who with eyes of fear would avoid Death's toll
E'en when Duty calls his name, for the roll
Of those who hear her imploring.

And they watched those Viking souls, and brave,
Unappalled by terrors of wind or wave,
And whose one concern was the weak to save
From doom, through the skipper's error.
And the bold with bullet kept cravens at bay,
And they sent them to Death by a speedier way ;
For 'tis only the thud of the lead will stay
The coward o'ercome with terror.

In the depths below, in that Titan frame,
Were the sons of Vulcan, who fed the flame,
That had driven it well; and their glorious fame
Is graven in honour, forever;
For in facing Death, undismayed, they gave
For the others their help, though in vain, to save;
And they sank to rest, in the watery grave:
Alas! But 'twas high endeavour.

There were brave souls there, who in stress were calm,
As they sheltered each woman and child from harm;
And they held in check every wild alarm,
As Death opened wide his portal;
And the Ice-fiends cried to each other and said:—
“Lo! The Vikings of old! They are not yet dead;
'Tis only the masks that have vanished, instead
Of the Vikings themselves, immortal.”

And as hand to hand in that moment great,
When perforce each trusted his all to Fate,
Then awoke the souls to that high estate
Of Life, through all deeds eternal;
For 'tis only cowardly souls, still blind
To the subtler things that are oped to Mind,
When the Life of Earth is discharged, that find
But void, in the realms supernal.

There were those of whom in the Book of Life
There is record, writ at that last great strife,
When each man was parted from child and wife,
And friend, for the sake of Duty.
There is record also of fear and shame,
Of a guerdon won of sinister fame;
There were some who had failed to play the game
At the moment when Soul wins beauty.

They had saved their lives, though an inward dread
Of themselves has become their reward, instead
Of that peace that ne'er to Dishonour is wed,

And knows of no bitter scorning.

But a brave man said to his wife, "Farewell,
You are in good hands; 'twill all be well."

And the last words sounded like clang of bell :—

"We'll meet, you and I, in the morning."

And the blank despair of the Mammon slaves,

In their faces writ, as in watery graves

They were tossed by heaving and restless waves,

Told *how* they had met, that morning ;

And the look of bliss, and of fret's surcease

In the lovers, clasped in Life's last release,

When they reached together pale Death's sweet peace,

Said too, they had met at the dawning.

And the first grey light of the bleak sad dawn

Reappeared in the easterly skies, and morn

Once again awoke ; but the sea forlorn

Was slowly and sadly heaving ;

And the icy shapes with their sombre hues

And their gleam of em'rald and sapphire blues

Had all faded away, and their southward cruise

Appeared but as Fancy's weaving.

For the greatest things are but Life's strange dreams ;

And they change their forms ; and in fitful gleams

And in thousand ways but reveal the streams

That shew the perpetual tending.

And the rich and poor, and the craven or brave,

Or the proud or humble, the noble or knave

Are but proved through all, as the Lord or Slave

In deeds of the world unending.

4. SUNDERED HEARTS

Wenn sich zwei Herzen scheiden
 Die sich dereinst geliebt . . .¹
 EMANUEL GEIBEL.

Alas, if hearts that once united were
 Should ever stir
 With strange discord ; and lose the subtle sense
 Of life intense ;
 The grateful glow, the joy, the radiant light,
 Whose glory bright
 Dispelled their night !

Alas, if ever Soul from Soul depart ;
 If loving heart
 Should sunder ties that bind, in tender chains,
 Each Soul that gains
 That passion-vision ; noble, high, supreme—
 The splendid gleam
 Of Heaven's own dream !

Alas that those, to whom the God of bliss
 His Eros-kiss
 Once gave, should e'er forget their radiant flight—
 By Love's great might—
 In that pure æther, where their souls unscathed
 Were glory-bathed,
 And light-enswathed !

No sun can shine on sundered love-bound souls ;
 For Sadness rolls

¹ If ever two hearts sunder
 That once had truly loved . . .

Its dark mysterious form o'er every scene
Of what has been.
The vista, wondrous fair, by Love revealed
Is e'er concealed
Till love is healed.

Ah Fate ! Why art thou ever cruel, stern ?
Why dost thou turn
The radiance, and the glow supreme, of Life
To darkened strife ;
And sunder hearts that knew great Eros' face,
And Psyche's grace ?
And Love efface ?

What is the end ? Shall we, in worlds to be,
Yet once more see
The shadows pass ; the clouds for ever part,
For every heart
That once had felt the great undying flame,
That truly came
In Love's own name ?

God will it ! Yet the anguish and the cold
That did enfold
The souls round whom Life's Sun had shed its light
Know sorrow's might.
For warmth that might have been is past recall :
And like Death's pall
Soul's shadows fall.

5. BEAUTY DIES, BUT IS ETERNAL

Ogni fiore al fin perde l'odore.¹
Italian Proverb.

“ FLOWERS shall fade and lose their fragrance
 In this world where all is fleeting ” :—

This has Fate decreed.

So must Joy, of two souls meeting,
 Know Soul's perfume by its vagrance
 In this world of need.

Wondrous glow of colours splendid,
 Every day the skies adorning
 By great Phoebus' power,
 Grace the eve; make fair the morning;
 But alas! how soon 'tis ended,
 Like a faded flower.

But the fragrance and the glory
 Live in memory eternal;
 Thus the flower and sky
 With their charm from realms supernal
 Ever tell their perfect story:
 And they never die!

6. ALAS, THE FAIREST DIE!

Auch das Schöne muss sterben.²
Nenie, Fr. von Schiller.

O EYES, whose soft and tender light
 Was my delight;
 Whose lustre told how much of joy
 Without alloy

¹ Every flower at last loses its fragrance.

² Alas too, even Beauty must die!

Could here be mine ; alas, thy power
In this dark hour
Hath fled for aye !

O face so fair, and passing sweet !
Wilt thou ne'er greet
With look expectant, and with flush
Like rose's blush
Him once again ; whose soul to thine
Must e'er incline,
Or anguished die ?

Thy voice is still ; and yet alone
I hear its tone
Like richest music sink and swell
Like notes of bell
Divinely sweet. Thy lips are dumb ;
Again shall come
Nor smile nor sigh.

Thy tresses fair, thy form of grace
And angel-face,
Thy winsome voice, and gentle eyes
Know Death's surprise.
Ah, I were poor to mute appeal
Did I not feel
That thou art nigh.

And broken-hearted here I stand
And see the hand
That oft caressed, so white and still.
Its touch shall thrill
Me ne'er again. " Alas ! " I cry,
In pain, " Ah why
Must Beauty die ? "

ECHOES OF HELLAS

The dearest, fairest, loveliest fade ;
 And in the shade
 Of Death and Sorrow we must mourn,
 As all things born.
 And yet 'twas glimpse of heaven bright
 To see the light
 In thy dear eye.

Ah, dear ! Thou wert too fair for earth !
 For heaven worth
 Wert thou. And now like summer rain
 My tears again
 Must flow. But in my heart is peace,
 And Pain's surcease ;
 For thou art nigh.

7. NEMESIS

A SILHOUETTE OF A TRAGEDY

*Ἐλκος ἔχω τὸν ἔρωτα, ῥέει δέ μοι ἔλκος ἰχώρ
 δάκρυον ὡτειλῆς οὐποτε τερσομένης.*¹
 Macedonius, *Anth. Pal.*, v, 225.

A MERRY day in the month of May ;
 And sparkling wine on an evening fine ;
 A woman loth ; then a plighted troth ;
 A lie told well, by a soul from hell.

Then sad regrets, and a joy that sets,
 Through faith absurd in a dastard's word ;
 And tearless eyes, but a Soul that cries ;
 No ray of light, for a Spirit's Night.

¹ A wound have I of love, and flows from my wound an ichor of tears, and the stab is never staunched.

A heaving breast ; then a plunge and rest
 From world of shame and torturing flame.
 Death's sad surprise in wide, stark eyes ;
 A life undone for a devil's fun.

A message true to a soul is due ;
 With flash of flame on its way it came ;
 'Twas writ in lead ; and it gladly sped
 On mission grim. A life's light is dim.

A forehead wet with an anguished sweat ;
 A lech'rous leer has changed to fear ;
 An ape of lust is lying in dust ;
 'Tis a devil's knell. Is all then well ?

8. SLEEP AND DEATH

Brüderlich umschlungen durchwandelten der Engel des Schlummers
 und der Todesengel die Erde.¹—Krummacher, *Tod und Schlaf*.

I

O SLEEP ! thou Angel ever mild,
 With tender grace of little child,
 How sweet is thy caress !
 'Tis thou, whose care it is to close,
 Each happy or each troubled day,
 With precious gift of sweet repose ;
 And thy renewing power and sway
 Doth daily ever bless.

When thou approachest, every heart
 Is warm with welcome, and we part
 With souls refreshed and strong ;

¹ In brotherly embrace wandered the Angel of Slumber and the
 Death-Angel through the Earth.

ECHOES OF HELLAS

And no one fears thy sweet embrace,
Nor young nor old feels strange alarms,
But each is ready to efface
Himself in thy dear, tender arms,
And hear thine Angel-song.

When, flushed with Fever's turgid stream,
The crimson life-tide e'er would seem
To torture and to rack;
When weak, with spirits broken, worn,
We feel no more the strength to fight,
And are in soul and body torn
With pain, and fled hath Life's delight,
'Tis thou, sweet sleep, we lack !

And when thy gracious presence nears,
Then past are all our dreadful fears
That troubled hearts shall fail;
From that strange land where thou dost dwell
Thou bringest balm for wearied soul;
And mind and body soon are well,
For 'tis thy gift that maketh whole;
Thou angel fair, all hail !

And when 'tis thine to gently close
Our eyes, and give us sweet repose,
What brighter realms appear !
By what high power dost thou endow
Poor mortals then, to see and know
The wonder-worlds? And dost allow
All life-chained souls to feel the glow
And freedom of the Seer ?

O Sleep ! thine ever-gracious smile,
For thee wins every heart ; and while
To Life we're bound, thou art

The friend of all, from youngest child
To wearied age. And weak and strong
And rich and poor, and bold and mild
All sound thy praise in fervid song ;
Belovèd of our heart !

II.

Ah, Death ! thou art Sleep's brother, stern
Of eye and mien. 'Tis thine to turn
Away our steps from earth.
Thou comest once for aye. None think
Thee friend, nor wish thy face to greet ;
Nor even, those who fain must drink
To thee ; 'tis not thy Self to meet :
'Tis Life hath lost its worth.

For though thy brother Sleep must end
Each day ; and thou must also send
Thy message to each soul
To tell its term of life on earth ;
Yet him we fear not : thee we hate.
We see thee tear away at birth
The new-born child. Ah, was it Fate
Gave thee this cruel rôle ?

The little babe, pain-born, the child,
The youth, the maid, the agèd mild,
Thou callest to thy bourne.
Relentless, cold, thou dost appear ;
Thou seest all the grief and woe
When those are gone we held as dear ;
Thou art a grim, relentless foe,
That pity may not turn.

ECHOES OF HELLAS

Art thou, in truth, an Angel kind
 To whose high mission we are blind?
 And like thy brother Sleep
 A friend of Man? Canst thou, too, smile?
 And 'neath those stern, dark eyes
 Of shadowy sadness, feel awhile
 That gracious tenderness we prize
 So much? Canst thou but weep?

Remove, thou Angel dark, thy mask!
 Let us behold thy face, and ask
 Thy mission and its aim.
 Hide not thyself beneath that grim
 And horrid aspect. Would'st thou shew
 Thyself with Love at peace, though dim
 Appearing, we should fully know
 That Friend is thy true name.

9. LIFE'S EVENSONG.

Und ist mir Ruhe noch beschieden
 So muss sie hier der Seele kommen.¹

Julius Sturm, *Abendlied*.

THE evening mists are gently falling,
 And sombre shadows, strange, appear;
 The forest birds their mates are calling;
 No zephyrs sweep the silent mere.

The silent mere reflects the glory
 And glowing light of western sky,—
 The pageant of some wonder-story
 Inscribed in colours from on high.

¹ And if for me Peace still is destined,
 Then must it here now reach my Soul.

On high the pageant now is fading,
The crimson turns to sober grey;
The purple tones the hills are shading
And slowly vanish with the day.

The day is passing in the gloaming,
The light of heaven now dies away;
O'er emerald sward and billows foaming,
Mysterious Night asserts her sway.

Her sway majestic is resplendent
With stars that shine with glowing light,
In courses rising or descendent,
Heaven's wondrous jewels of the Night !

The Night brings rest and inward quiet,
A grateful sense of deepest peace,
When Earth's wild rush, her fume and riot,
And poignant sorrow, find surcease.

Surcease of things that rack and worry,
Shall it then come with Death's dark night ?
Shall we have done with all the hurry,
With fret and fume, and Life's delight ?

With Life's delight, and all its sadness ?
Shall we then know some deeper rest ?
Some new existence where in gladness
Man's spirit is for ever blest ?

For ever blest ? Words calling, calling,
From inner deeps of soul's unrest ;
The magic of their falling, falling,
We'll know when comes the last great rest.

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